



LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
M113d
v.1

24/2
1344
Edith West

11 Grafton St

from the Antecessor -

Aug 27. 5
P 3775

DISPLAY.

A NOVEL.

BY
THE HON^{BLE}
MRS. MABERLY.

AUTHOR OF

"LEONTINE," "THE LADY AND THE PRIEST,"

&c., &c.

"What will this come to?"—TIMON OF ATHENS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.
1855.

PRINTED BY CHARLES BEVAN AND SON,
STREET'S BUILDINGS, CHAPEL STREET, GROSVENOR SQUARE.

823

M113d

v. 1

DISPLAY.

CHAPTER I.

It was the night before the wedding !

The next morning, the beautiful Laura Malcolm was to be married to Sir Aubrey Mannering, one of the richest baronets of the day. It was what is called "a great match." Everything was ready, and the bustle attending upon all the necessary preparations for so grand an event, having at length subsided, the inmates of Camerford House might be supposed to have betaken themselves to repose.

The evidence of the great labour of the preceding day justified such a supposition, for the magnificent hall and staircase were already ornamented with a profusion of wreaths of choice evergreens, to which, flowers, freshly gathered, were to be added early in the morning.

Mr. Malcolm, father of the bride elect, having resolved that nothing should be wanting to give *éclat* to a marriage he had long had so much at heart, had given orders for a sumptuous *fête*, which was to begin immediately upon the return of the bridal party from the parish church, where the solemn ceremony was to take place. A grand breakfast within the house had long been announced, and it was said that the hospitality of Mr. Malcolm was to be extended next day, not only to all the most distinguished residents of his own county,

but to those of the two neighbouring ones, so that there appeared little danger of his handsome and spacious rooms not being well filled.

In addition to this, the beautiful pleasure grounds were to be thrown open to the tenantry and their friends, and rows of marquees, and an endless profusion of coloured lamps, and places for fireworks, proclaimed that the rejoicings were intended to be on an unusual scale of grandeur. Mr. Malcolm, always magnificent, had on this occasion outdone himself. He was determined that *his* daughter should not, as he confidentially expressed it to Mr. Winthrop, his agent, "be married up in a corner."

So everything was splendid, and many a heart beat high with anticipations of delight.

A *fête* in the country is of tenfold more

consequence than a *fête* in town; and Mr. Malcolm, having undergone all the usual fatigue and annoyance inseparable upon being the giver of so grand a party, was not sorry to be at length left for a few hours alone. He had watched, with an anxiety somewhat at variance with his usual stately manner, for the first symptoms of declining day, but no one would take the hint, although his repeated assurances of being “perfectly satisfied,” and that “all was quite ready,” might have shown to the busy throng around him, how ardently he desired their departure.

Still no one would go. Every one was intent upon admiring his own handiwork; and there was always some “last thing” to be done, which kept the house in a continual state of disturbance, and began to cause no inconsiderable irritation in the mind of its owner.

At last his vexations came to an end—for vexations, like everything else, have an end, though irritable people pretend never to believe it. One by one, friends, servants, workmen, and attendants, all disappeared, and Camerford House was left to its repose.

This repose, however, was not, as has been before stated, so complete as might have been imagined. It was long after midnight, when a light step might have been detected passing along the gallery which led to the sleeping apartments in the west wing of the mansion. It paused before the door at the end—some one entered the room, and the door was immediately closed, with as much precaution as though some fearful deed of darkness was about to be done within that chamber.

It was, however, no midnight burglar with blackened face, who thus stealthily

intruded into the actual abode of youth and beauty ; for the figure that appeared was that of a very young 'girl, so young as to have only just passed the age of childhood. She paused immediately on entering the room, and threw a hasty glance around, as if to be quite sure of being alone. From the nervous timidity of her manner, it might have been thought that she stood upon forbidden ground ; but it was not the case. That little room, with its blue satin walls, was the dressing-room of her sister, Laura Malcolm, the bride-elect.

But where, at that moment, was the beautiful Laura ? She, who was to enact so important a part in the morrow's pageant, and the happiness or sorrow of whose whole life hung upon the few words she would have to utter within a still fewer number of hours from that instant, was wrapped in a

repose as calm and profound as might have been expected, were nothing about to occur to disturb the even tenour of her days.

In the adjoining chamber, Laura Malcolm was fast asleep—but Geneviève, her young sister, watched—and thought.

As Geneviève perceived that her entrance had been perfectly unnoticed, her fears seemed to vanish. She advanced to the table occupying the centre of the room, and, setting down a small taper which she carried, she looked carefully round.

Everywhere the bridal finery ready prepared, announced the coming ceremony. A beautiful lace dress was laid, apparently with great care, upon the sofa of blue damask, the veil, and wreath of orange blossom and jessamine, were placed by its side, while on the dressing-table were jewel cases, and all the minor appendages of the

toilet, arranged with the most scrupulous nicety.

Poor Geneviève! it had been her work, and she had come to take a last look, and to see that every thing was in the place which she had assigned to it. She went round the room. All was as she had left it, except the wreath of orange flowers. It had fallen on one side. With a gesture of impatience she replaced it upon the little gilt stand on which it had been hung.

“How unlucky!” she exclaimed half aloud. “The bride’s crown fallen! but perhaps Laura has been trying it on. She said to-day it did not become her—that she hated a wreath. I wish she had not said so. It may bring some bad luck. And yet she looked so beautiful in it—her black hair shining through the white flowers—dear, dear Laura!”

With a deep sigh the young girl turned her eyes to the closed door of the room where her sister slept, and for a moment seemed as if inclined to rush in and disturb a state of quietude in which her own spirit had no share. Her colour went and came. Her large eyes alternately flashed and filled with tears, as she strained and twisted her clasped hands in the violence of her emotion.

She would have given the world to have had one last embrace—one last assurance from the sister she so passionately loved, that she would love her still—that this marriage should not separate their hearts!

The thought of such a possibility was great agony. Geneviève cast wild looks round her. She felt as if she could not bear what was going to happen, and, starting from where she stood, her hand was in

an instant upon the lock of the door. Ere, however, she could turn it, her eye once more caught the gleam of the white dress in the candle-light, and the sudden recollection of the next day's coming ceremony fell upon her.

Why should she seek to agitate her sister? She who was on the morrow to be the idol of so many admiring eyes! Geneviève could not be so selfish, and with a great effort she turned away from the door, and walked to the other side of the room.

As she passed a small table in a recess, some flowers half withered, which were lying upon it, met her eye. She recognised them as those which Laura had worn that day at dinner. A glove was on the ground near them, and, snatching it up, she kissed it with the most passionate fondness.

Again and again she pressed every flower

to her lips, murmuring, as she did so, "Laura, dear, dear Laura!"—till at last she burst into the most violent paroxysm of tears, and sobbed as if her heart was breaking.

It was a touching sight, that outpouring of genuine grief and affection from so young a heart; but Geneviève, though young, was not childish, and thoughts and doubts had arisen in her mind which she had not dared to breathe to any ear, but which redoubled her sorrow.

All day she had been so occupied, so observed, that she could not cry—but now that she was alone, what bitter tears fell over those faded flowers: her slight and bending figure seemed actually unable to sustain its own weight, and for a long time she continued to sit upon the low seat on which she had at first thrown herself, leaning

her face upon her hands, while the tears poured over them.

All at once she suddenly started from her position. She raised herself in her chair, and seemed to listen attentively. There was a sound upon the deep stillness of the house. At first it was indistinct, but soon a coming footstep could be heard. Nearer and nearer it came. Geneviève started to her feet. Her cheeks blanched with terror. Like many people, she was ashamed of her emotion—ashamed of what is most beautiful in the human heart—affection and devotion to another.

With a trembling hand, she gathered up the flowers which lay upon her lap, threw them on the table, and hastily concealed the treasured glove within the folds of her dress. All this time her eyes were fixed upon the door, towards which a heavy step now rapidly advanced.

It opened at last—that much dreaded door—but neither slowly nor stealthily, nor by small degrees—for it required the very ample space of a well wide-opened door to admit a full view of the portly form which presented itself, and which was no other than that of Mrs. Leigh, the housekeeper of Camerford House, in her striped cotton gown and red shawl, her every-day dress.

If the countenance of Genevieve betrayed alarm, it was nothing compared to the scared expression which overspread the comely face of Mrs. Leigh, as the apparition of Geneviève, in her white dress, standing in the middle of the room, met her view. She started so violently, that the candle she held, fell from her hand, and the dim light which remained in the apartment, did not help to mitigate her fears.

“Lor bless me!” she exclaimed, retreat-

ing a few paces, "who's there? What are you doing? What business have you here?"

"It's only me," said the sweet voice of Geneviève, and, raising her head—for, on the fall of the candlestick, she had bent to the floor to pick it up, and save the cotton gown of Mrs Leigh from being instantly in a blaze, she looked her full in the face.

"Only me," repeated the astonished woman, advancing a few steps. "Why, sure, it's Miss Geneviève! How ever could you go for to frighten a body so? Sure enough, I thought it was a ghost. Who'd ever have dreamt of finding you out of your warm bed at this here time of night? It's out of all reason, I declare."

"Don't be angry, Sarah," said Geneviève, soothingly, "or I shall call you Mrs.

Leigh, and never come to your store-room any more."

"Yes you will, though, dear child," said Mrs. Leigh, smoothing down her apron, and composing her ruffled dignity; "and lots of good things I shall have to give you now. I have heaps of fine things in the store-room now, in spite of Mr. Fillagreeni locking up his door till to-morrow, that we mayn't, as he says, 'copy his patterns in the country.' Set him up, indeed, with his Italian gibberish and spun sugar! He'll never beat me in coloured almonds, while my name is Sarah Leigh. Such lovely blues and pinks I made to-day."

"I am sure they are beautiful, Sarah," said Geneviève, who, at that moment, was thinking of anything but sugared almonds, and dreaded Mrs. Leigh's loquacity.

"And you must be so very tired! Why didn't you go to bed?"

“Me go to bed!” exclaimed Mrs. Leigh, drawing herself up with marvellous dignity.

“Me go to bed, Miss Geneviève, on such a night as this! I trust I know my business too well for that. I havn’t been housekeeper for five and thirty years for nothing;” and the broad face of the good-humoured woman expanded with happy self-complacency, as she thought of the days gone by.

“But indeed, Sarah, everything is ready, and so nice and so pretty,” suggested Geneviève, who had sunk into an arm chair.

“And if it is, Miss Geneviève, may I take the liberty of asking why you are here? Now don’t look so sad, my poor child,” added the good housekeeper quickly, as she caught the hurried glance approaching desperation, which Geneviève, as if in answer, cast upon the finery around her.

“Oh, Sarah!” she murmured gently,

but her eyes filled with tears, and she could not add another word.

“Well, I dare say, of course we shall miss our young lady at first. Of course we shall. Such a one isn’t to be seen every day. But, then,” continued Mrs. Leigh, in her most cheerful tones, “every one must be married some day or other. And such a wedding, too! Why, all the old maids and young ladies in the country will be dying of envy. And such a fine, grand gentleman as Sir Aubrey is, too! Well, I’m sure I shouldn’t fret if *my* sister was making such a match! Now do, Miss Geneviève, cheer up a bit, there’s a darling! Do just come here, and let me see how you would look in the orange flower wreath. We shall have to think of *your* wedding soon.”

“Oh! Sarah!” cried Geneviève, turning scarlet.

“Don’t make all that light”—and she moved fretfully away from the dressing-table, upon which Mrs. Leigh had officiously lighted all the candles.

“I only want to take one more look at the pearls,” she replied.—“Bless my heart, if that isn’t a necklace fit for a queen; now do, Miss Geneviève, look at the diamond clasp! and four rows of pearls too! what a deal of money they must be worth! and yet you wont look at them. Well, its lucky Miss Laura had more sense, if I may make bold to speak my mind”—and with rather an indignant air, Mrs. Leigh closed the jewel-box with a jerk, and put it back in its place.

For a few minutes she was silent, and contented herself with examining everything within her reach. With the help of a huge pair of spectacles upon her nose, every

intricacy of the beautiful patterns upon the lace was duly admired. Having turned over each fold, and settled it back again in its former position, she at length appeared satisfied with her inspection ; and, taking up her candlestick, exclaimed—

“ It’s all just the most lovely wedding-dress I ever set my eyes upon. I’m glad I had a good look at it, for to-morrow, I suppose, I shall be in such a fluster, I shouldn’t know lace from muslin. Well—I must be off now—I have my rounds to go and all the maids to call—we shall have hard work enough yet, to get up all the flowers by ten o’clock. It must be after three, now—”

And, diving down into her spacious pocket, she drew out her great silver watch—

“ No, I declare—it’s only half-past two,”

she observed, with an air of infinite satisfaction—then, fixing her eyes upon the pale face of Geneviève, she added, kindly—

“ Won’t you go to bed, dear child?—you look so tired.”

“ Oh ! I could not sleep,” said Geneviève, hurriedly.

“ You’ll never be able to stand to-morrow,” continued the good housekeeper—
“ and the breakfast, and the speeches, and the leave-takings — oh ! it will be a busy day ! ”

Geneviève burst into tears.

“ Now, don’t take on so, my poor darling child,” said Mrs. Leigh, going up to her—“ it brings bad luck to cry at a wedding.”

“ Dear, dear Laura,” sobbed Geneviève, convulsively—“ perhaps I shall never see her again ! ”

“Nonsense! she will be back directly,” answered her kind-hearted comforter.

“Oh! do you think so? Why do you think so? How do you know?” cried Geneviève, raising her head, and looking with her radiant eyes brim-full of tears, into the face of her companion.

“I’m sure of it,” was the encouraging reply—“sure and certain she’ll never stay long from her old home.”

“And I am sure,” said Geneviève, wildly, “that she will never come again—I can’t get it out of my head, and it is that that breaks my heart. Something bad is going to happen—I know it.”

“God bless me!” exclaimed Mrs. Leigh, struck by the vehemence of the young girl’s manner—“What could be going to happen? And how could you know?”

“I don’t know—I *feel* it,” said Gene-

viève, with a shudder—"I have a presentiment."

"A what?"

"A feeling," replied Geneviève, suddenly recollecting Mrs. Leigh did not understand French—"a feeling that comes before things—before a misfortune; and, besides, there was such a bad omen—I found the bride's crown fallen down when I came in."

"Well, what of that, Miss Geneviève?"

"Why, they say in France, if the bride's crown falls, she will never be a happy wife. It is a bad omen—a sign. Do you believe in signs, Sarah?"—and Geneviève, who, during her partial education in a convent in the south of France, had picked up an endless variety of legends and superstitious ideas, looked wistfully into the staring eyes of her astonished auditor.

"Signs! God help us—no—yes—that

is to say, of course, not ! *I* believe in any of their heathenish persuasions ! no, not I, Miss Geneviève. I say my prayers, and read my Bible, like a proper Christian—every Sunday evening, a chapter !”

And Mrs. Leigh put on a very devout air, although, in her inmost soul, she was anything but free from superstitious fancies, much worse than those to which the frightened eyes of Geneviève pleaded guilty. As it was, Mrs. Leigh felt a nervous tremor in the ends of her fingers, and wished she had not heard of “the sign.”—Just then, the great clock on the stairs struck three.

“What’s that ?” she cried with a start, as the first stroke fell upon her ear—but the second re-assured her, and the candlestick resumed its erect position, for it was upon the point of being again precipitated upon the floor.

“Lor’ bless us !” she exclaimed, as, with a great effort, she came back to her natural train of ideas and tone of voice—“if there isn’t three o’clock—why the daylight will be here in a minute. Now do, Miss Geneviève, lie down and rest yourself, and don’t be thinking of all the nonsense you heard from them there nuns in France. How should they know, poor benighted heathen things, shut up and fed upon black bread and vinegar ? Rye broth and carrots for their Sunday dinner. God help the poor creatures. How should they know better ? But you, Miss Geneviève—you, with all your masters and governesses, and your fine edication—English and French—though, to be sure,” she added, as she thought of the nuns—“if it was all English, it might have been better. I can’t think why people can’t stick to their own country—thank

Heaven, *I* never was out of England. If I had, I should have lost my hand at the pickles and preserves. No, thank goodness, I'm English, and I pray that I never may cross the sea, while my name's Sarah Leigh."

"Sarah," said the sweet voice of Geneviève, who, accustomed to the meanderings of the spirit of Mrs. Leigh, knew that the next time she pulled up, might be either in Kamschatka or Van Diemen's Land—"I cannot go to bed—I could not sleep in my own room, but I will lie down here on this sofa in the corner, if you will just settle the cushion, and give me that shawl."

"There's a dear," cried Mrs. Leigh, in her natural way, and hastily complying with the request—"Now do lie down—I am so glad you will get a little rest—if it was only for an hour."

“Thank you—that will do,” said Geneviève, settling herself—“I suppose we must be all ready by nine—for the carriages are ordered at ten. Good night, Sarah—and thank you”—and Geneviève, longing to be alone, sank back on her cushions.

“Good night—and God bless you, dear child. I must make haste and go my rounds.’

And, strange to say, without another word, Mrs. Leigh left the room.

CHAPTER II.

THERE were few persons more deserving of encomium than the good woman now waddling down the broad staircase of Camerford House, prepared to make her usual tour of inspection — deferred to that unwonted hour, by reason of the onerous duties the hurry of the preceding day had entailed upon her.

Sarah Leigh was a good old-fashioned housekeeper, not the least above her business. Mr. Malcolm was far too intelligent a man to have a fine lady for a servant ;

and if Mrs. Leigh's bonnet and shawl were sometimes sneered at by the flaunting dependents of other great houses in the neighbourhood, as she made her way to her seat in the parish church on Sundays, Mr. Malcolm had the satisfaction of knowing that in her he possessed not only an active servant, but a true and conscientious friend.

The zeal with which she performed her duties was wonderful. Though nearly as broad as she was long, she was "here, there, and everywhere" in a minute. Nothing escaped her vigilance. The phalanx of maids under her were drilled to perfection—the household was as regular as clock-work—and if a particle of dust had once been discovered on any of the furniture, she would have deemed herself disgraced for ever.

But it was on the subject of fire that she

was most peculiarly sensitive. One would have thought that the whole of her savings were invested in the office in which Camerford House was insured. Its being insured, however, by no means caused her to relax in her attention. Country houses that were insured had been burnt down, and that in a very mysterious way, too ; and Mrs. Leigh secretly believed the fault always lay with some one within the walls.

But she blamed nobody, for she was not an ill-natured woman, and contented herself with nightly searching into every hole and corner, where by any accident a spark could have fallen. She could not, as she expressed it, “lay down in her bed,” if this all-important duty had not been religiously fulfilled.

Not even on this most fatiguing day, when since sunrise she had scarcely for a

moment rested, would the worthy Mrs. Leigh relax in her vigilance. On quitting the room where she had left Geneviève, she instantly proceeded on her search, and having satisfied herself that the west wing was perfectly safe from the dangers of ignition, she crossed the great hall, in order to carry on her inspection on the other side of the house.

She had soon completed her survey of the upper rooms, and descending to the ground-floor, the inutility of examining its spacious apartments—the doors of which all stood open—occurred to her, and she was preparing to depart, when, on turning to take a last look, all at once she espied something shining at the other end of the gallery. It was a good way off, and she could not make it out. It looked like a long silver thread—perhaps it was the

moon! But no—the moon did not shine that night.

Perplexed and somewhat alarmed, as she fancied she saw the light increase, and then disappear for a moment, she advanced rapidly, in the hope that what she saw arose neither from fire nor candle, but that some half-closed shutter let in the first glimmer of the coming day. As she approached the spot, however, this idea vanished. The light was still there. A bright distinct line of light shining on the oaken floor. She could even see the joinings of the wood, and the light came from beneath the library door—the small library, or study, as it was called. It was Mr. Malcolm's own room.

In an agony of fear, the good woman was about to rush in, for the one idea of fire immediately suggested itself to her mind. Her hand almost touched the lock

of the door, when, pausing for an instant to collect herself, it struck her that all was perfectly still. No rushing, no crackling, and no smell of burning wood !

The house, therefore, could not be on fire. Mrs. Leigh drew a long breath, and with this happy conviction came the thought of the study and its inmate. It could not be Mr. Malcolm ; it was impossible. He never sat up. Regular in his habits almost to a fault, his movements could be always calculated to a nicety. Twelve o'clock was his hour for going to bed ; and whether the house was full or empty, no one could say they ever saw him enter his dressing-room a moment later.

It could not, therefore, be Mr. Malcolm, whose vigils caused this mysterious line of light in the passage ; neither was it the agent. Mr. Winthrop had quitted the

house at nightfal; and he and Mr. Malcolm were the only probable occupants of the study.

Mrs. Leigh began to be seriously anxious. She thought of knocking at the door; but supposing she was told to "come in," and that she went in, and found—what? She did not exactly know what she expected to find. She was growing alarmed—she, a lone woman, there at that hour! She put her candle close to the door—looked up it and down it, but, alas! could not see through it.

No signs of violence upon the outside. The bright mahogany glistened in the candlelight, so that the poor woman could see her face in it. Did she see how pale she looked? No! she saw nothing but that light beneath the door; and while she kept her head turned to watch it, as she retreated upon tiptoe down the gallery, it seemed to

grow longer and longer, and to reach her very feet. With what haste she turned the corner of the hall. The staircase was near ; she got to the lower step, and sat down to breathe.

A faint blue tint had come upon the ever-green wreaths since she had passed—Oh ! if the daylight would but come quite out !

“ Whatever shall I do ? ” said the agitated Mrs. Leigh ; “ some one is shut up in that study—and as sure as I’m alive it’s not my master—Had I better call up the men ? But no—such a stir at this time of night ! —I know what I’ll do.—I’ll just step out on the terrace—the blinds mayn’t be quite down—I’ll soon see who has got into our house, and he shan’t get out of it so easily, I promise you.”

And, full of valiant intentions, Mrs. Leigh pulled herself up by the bannisters, and hur-

ried away to a side-door opening upon the terrace.—With a trembling hand she unfastened the bolts, and threw open the door. The sudden draft extinguished the candle, and for a few moments she stood bewildered—she could scarcely see where she was.

It is true, a faint blue streak showed the horizon, and began to steal in through the skylight, far above her head, but all the side of the house bordered by the terrace, was in deep shadow, and the prospect was decidedly uninviting.

The wind, although a summer one, was rather high, and was moaning amongst the trees, and every now and then a stronger gust made the boughs of the taller poplars shiver and sigh, with a sound that was not particularly pleasant, when one could not see their pretty silver leaves playing and fluttering in the air. Mrs. Leigh, although

far from repenting of her purpose, did not quite like the expedition.

“Lor bless me!” she said, half aloud; “but its dreadful dark—just the night for ghosts; but go I must. Heaven help us! what a howl,” she added, as the wind whistled through the half-opened door, and she pulled her shawl over her head. “I shouldn’t wonder if we have a thunder-storm—It’s a bad sign for a wedding, they say.”

And with her head full of signs and omens, in which, notwithstanding her genuine English education, she was a firm believer, she sallied forth.

It was a good way round, for the house was very large; and, before she arrived at her destination, her agitation considerably increased—for she had to pass over a spot where, about a year back, a workman had

been killed by falling from a scaffold ; and it had been constantly affirmed in the village, and all about the place—though in very low whispers—that his ghost ‘walked’ the terrace ever since.

Certain it was, that several people had been frightened into fits by the said ghost, which was reported to be ‘a man without a head.’ They need not have gone as far as the terrace to find one. It was, however, a fact, that a man had fractured his skull there, and died upon the spot. Mrs. Leigh well knew the very stone—it was a long flag, a little whiter than the rest, and Geneviève, with her pretty foreign ways, had painted a little black cross upon it. She dared not make it any larger ; but Mrs. Leigh, as she cautiously avoided stepping on the stone as she passed, felt as if she could see it quite well.

She tightened the shawl over her nose, and when she arrived within a few paces of the study windows, she was, as she said to herself, “all in the shakes, and felt no-how !”

Still, her courage never flagged—it was part of her duty ; she was acting in defence of her master’s property—and her ample bosom swelled with conscious dignity, as she felt she had surmounted the difficulty of the ghosts, and was about to make the discovery she deemed of so much importance.

Surely enough, the light was in the study still. Brightly it threw its glare upon the smooth white flags which bordered the terrace. The three large windows, however, had all their blinds carefully drawn down. The first was impenetrable—the blind fitted close, as if pasted to the glass. With the

second, however, she was more lucky—the blind had been crumpled by opening the window, which was a French one, and hung a little on one side.

A long slit between the edge and the window-frame gave a great portion of the apartment to view. Mrs. Leigh raised herself upon her toes—she could see half the room. A lamp was standing on a large writing-table almost in the middle of it. That accounted for the stream of light, and the line beneath the door—but no living creature could she see.

For a long time she watched patiently, and at last began to believe that which she would not at first have admitted—that the butler had forgotten to put out the lights. Suddenly, however, a shadow passed between her and a second light, less glaring than that of the lamp, and which seemed to

be placed a little further down the room.

There was, therefore, certainly some one in the study. Who could it be? In another moment all doubt was dispelled—a figure moved across the floor. It was Mr. Malcolm himself. To any other person this would have seemed an event too natural to require any comment; but Mrs. Leigh, thoroughly conversant with every habit and peculiarity of a master she had long served, thought otherwise.

It was, therefore, with some anxiety that she watched his movements, as he advanced directly to the table upon which the lamp stood.

He held in his hand what appeared to her a bundle of papers; but, on his seating himself at the table, he unfolded the packet, and she then saw that it was but one sheet,

and that, of unusually large dimensions. He spread it upon the the table before him, and, drawing an ink-stand towards him, began to read.

In a few moments, however, he seemed to have completed his task, and much to his own satisfaction, for he smiled and looked excessively pleased, as he turned the paper in every direction towards the lamp, holding it several times between himself and the light, as if to examine its transparency.

“Why, its only a law paper, after all,” said Mrs. Leigh, forgetting, in her disappointment, that she was alone, and speaking in her natural tone of voice—“I know it by the long letters in the corner! Well, to be sure—a fine fright I have had for nothing. Only to see my master reading a law paper! But, to be sure, who’d have

thought he'd have sat up till this hour to do it! And the wedding-day, too. Well, now my mind's quiet, I'll just go in again, and set myself a bit to rights, for here's the daylight coming."

It is just possible that in her vexation the worthy Mrs. Leigh raised her voice to such a pitch that the sound penetrated through the windows into the study, or, perhaps, the blue light of the dawning day announced to the watcher that his vigils ought to cease. Certain it is, that the lamp within the room was suddenly extinguished, and, by the faint light that remained, Mrs. Leigh could see no more—so she made her way back to the housekeeper's room as fast as she could, poured out a comfortable cup of tea, and sat down to enjoy herself quietly till the time came for her to put on her new suit of stiff brown lute-

string, and straw bonnet with yellow ribbons, in which she was to appear at the wedding.

CHAPTER III.

Two or three hours! What a little space compared to eternity! Yet, how eventful in the lives of men—in the appearance of places—in the alteration of feelings!

As the trusty Mrs. Leigh rolled along in the old family coach, destined to convey the *élite* of the female part of the household from Camerford House to the church, she could not help smiling, as she passed in front of the terrace, and saw the windows of the library.

She kept her recollections, however, to

herself; for she was a woman of great prudence when not under the influence of her fear of ghosts, and there was no danger of them just then. Never had any place worn a brighter or happier look than Camerford House did upon that morning.

The promise of the night had not been fulfilled; daylight had brought with it all its splendour, and bathed the beautiful grounds in a flood of sunshine. The interior of the mansion had likewise recovered its gaiety. The guests invited to witness the ceremony were rapidly arriving. The marriage settlements at the last moment were duly signed, and the bride in all her finery, was for the last time doing the honours of her father's house, and receiving with the most perfect grace, the congratulations of a whole host of particular friends, who were hastening already to load

with flattery and caresses the future mistress of Mannering Park, and possessor of a fortune of thirty thousand a year.

Even Geneviève, the timid, tearful Geneviève, had summoned all her courage, and, in her capacity of bridesmaid, hovered round her sister with the prettiest effect imaginable. Very lovely she looked in her dress of pink and white, with her large clustering fair curls escaping from beneath her bonnet. Half child, and half woman, she united the playfulness of the one, with the sensibility of the other, and was the most attractive creature possible.

In person, she did not the least resemble her sister. Laura was very tall, with very dark eyes and hair, a fine oval face, and a manner so naturally dignified, that she seemed born to command. Geneviève, although with the same cast of features, was

almost a *blonde* ; but the darkness of her eyebrows and eyelashes, and the deep blue of her eyes, gave a very unusual amount of expression to her face ; and her manner was so gentle and winning, that everybody loved her directly.

It seemed impossible to have a harsh thought towards a creature so kind and so harmless, always on the watch for the comfort of others, and winding herself round all hearts by the fascination of her manner.

In this, Geneviève strongly resembled her father, who, an extremely handsome man, although not in his first youth, possessed that nameless power of attraction which few were able to resist. Those who had even made up their minds to dislike Mr. Malcolm, found it impossible to do so. There was something about him which acted like a charm. It might be his voice, which

was peculiarly sweet and musical ; or it might be his manner, which, though stately, was perfect from its natural simplicity ; or, perhaps, it was his smile, which disclosed the most splendid teeth in the world.

One, or all of these gifts might have made him what he was ; but it is certain that he possessed the art of pleasing and interesting those who were brought into contact with him in a very uncommon degree.

His beautiful daughters shared this feeling with the world in general. They were devoted to him—subservient to his will—and seemed proud as well as fond of belonging to him. Laura was his especial favourite ; Geneviève was so young, he did not understand her ; but Laura, his beautiful Laura, was the idol of his heart.

She was in some respects exactly his own

counterpart, that is to say, as worldly as possible. The marriage, which, after many anxieties and heart-burnings, he had so successfully arranged for her, perfectly suited both parties. It is true, that father and daughter would have preferred a man of higher rank, but, then, Sir Aubrey Mannerling had a clear, unencumbered property, and that was a circumstance by no means to be lost sight of.

Never was a man more proud and flattered by the beauty of his child than was Mr. Malcolm, as he handed his daughter from her carriage, and led her up the aisle of the church, which, of course, was filled to suffocation. The beauty of Laura Malcolm could very well bear the trying ordeal of full dress in daylight and a bright sun. Her complexion was faultless, and the splendid pearls she wore were scarcely whiter

than the lovely neck and arms which they adorned—a fact which was duly observed and commented upon by all, and particularly by some very old-fashioned persons in the church, who had imagined the bride would walk up the aisle with her veil down.

Public attention and admiration were not, however, so completely engrossed by the beautiful Laura, as to make people forget to ask, “What sort of man was Sir Aubrey Mannering?” To many, at that moment collected together, he was an utter stranger, and very great was their curiosity about him.

His appearance, of course, was their first object, and the general opinion was, that he could not look to advantage by the side of Mr. Malcolm, who always threw everybody into the shade. In this, however, they were

agreeably disappointed ; for Sir Aubrey, although far from possessing the same attractions as his splendid-looking father-in-law, was decidedly very good looking—tall, pale, and gentlemanlike, with a very courteous smile, and a somewhat reserved manner. He walked well, held himself very upright, and seemed perfectly aware of his own consequence.

It was true that his hair was just of that tint that ill-natured people choose to call red, that his lips were rather too thin, and that his large blue eyes had sometimes a look of coldness and contempt which was not encouraging ; but these slight defects were, in the general joy, completely overlooked ; and when, at the conclusion of the service, he left the church, with his beautiful bride hanging upon his arm, they were pronounced by the gossips of the place to be

“the handsomest couple that had ever been seen in the country.”

Everybody was, however, disposed to be well pleased on that day; and, indeed, it would have been very ungrateful, if they had not been so, for never had more ample means been afforded for the amusement of the public.

The wedding-breakfast was superb. No tearful eyes spoiled the brightness of the many fair faces present; the usual amount of healths was drunk, and the usual number of speeches made, and everything went off as well as possible.

Mr. Malcolm made a singularly well-turned and appropriate discourse, which was much applauded; and on quitting the house, and entering the large marquee, already well filled with guests, his oratorical powers were again called forth by the burst

of affectionate welcome with which he was received. Some people, learned in such matters, thought he wandered slightly from his subject, and dwelt a little too much on morality and his true English heart and feelings; but, as the one point met with an enthusiastic reception from the upper classes, and the other sentiment found an echo in the bosom of the multitude of true Britons who were enjoying his hospitality, and was welcomed, again and again, by hearty cheers, Mr. Malcolm had no cause to suspect he had overdone his part. Perhaps, as his wife had been a Frenchwoman, he thought it necessary to explain how very English he was.

At all events, he was perfectly satisfied. He had his own reasons for all he had said and done, for Mr. Malcolm never said or did anything without a reason. He was a

great actor, and a good one ; and on this occasion his talents were most naturally displayed. He walked about with a sweet, bland smile upon his handsome face, seeming only to enjoy the enjoyments of others, and to have no separate wish or object. There was a sort of paternal benediction in his manner that old and young appeared equally to cherish ; and Mr. Malcolm, always popular, seemed on that day to be idolized.

In the due course of time, the bride and bridegroom took their departure for Mannering Park, which was at some distance from Camerford House. Lady Mannering, from her carriage with its four splendid greys and outriders, gracefully bowed her adieux to the assembled guests. Not a shadow of emotion passed over her lovely face, as she drove off amidst the plaudits of the

multitude ; and Mr. Malcolm turned with renewed vivacity to do the honours of his fête, satisfied beyond measure with the events of the day.

Even to the most minute detail, everything had perfectly succeeded. The brilliancy of the scene was at its height—joy sparkled upon every countenance—and, as the gay groups dispersed to wander over the beautiful pleasure-grounds, no one had leisure to perceive that poor Geneviève had disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. MALCOLM had been a widower for many years. His wife, a lady of good family in the south of France, had died immediately after the birth of Geneviève, who was five years younger than her sister.

Mr. Malcolm had never shown the slightest disposition to marry again; and in spite of innumerable attacks from different quarters, was still single. The greater part of the year he lived at Camerford House, his beautiful place, which, situated in one of the richest southern counties of

England, was within an easy distance of London. He, however, by no means shut himself up in the country, for he went regularly to town in the season, and when at home received a succession of visitors, which left him very little leisure for solitude.

The world being his object, he did not grudge the pains and labour he bestowed upon it, and all its numerous calls and duties were obeyed to the letter. His office of *chaperon* had been a new occasion for display, and nothing could exceed the grave attention with which he discharged its onerous functions, and ministered to the wants and caprices of a daughter somewhat exacting and fastidious.

Every luxury, every indulgence was bestowed upon her with an unsparing hand, and during the two seasons of her short career, Laura Malcolm had shone as a star

of universal brilliancy, and not a little envy and malice had, in consequence, followed her steps.

This position at once wearying and delighting to him, had now by her marriage with Sir Aubrey Mannering been brought to a close, and Mr. Malcolm found himself suddenly freed from a heavy responsibility, and one which had secretly caused him more anxiety than he wished to have known. He had now leisure to devote himself to his own concerns, and to the exclusive furtherance of a project, which, next to the marriage of his daughter, had long been a cherished one.

Why he should wish to burthen himself with such an accession of trouble and annoyance was a secret best known to himself, but certain it is, that to become member for his own county, was now his great ambition,

and as there were rumours of the intended retirement of one of the present members, from ill-health, there was little time to be lost.

As is usual on such occasions, his sanguine supporters insisted, that his success was beyond a doubt, and the vivid recollection of the enthusiasm with which he had been received on the occasion of the wedding fête, tended very much to confirm this impression on his own mind. Still, he resolved to leave nothing undone that might tend to advance his views, and in order to fit himself for the character, which he longed to assume, of "popular candidate," he set immediately about divesting himself of whatever appearance of exclusiveness might attach to him.

Hitherto, his society had been limited to one class, and no one was more par-

ticular than Mr. Malcolm in the choice or cultivation of an acquaintance ; but now, with his new designs, he found he must step out of his own orbit, and mix more freely with all classes of men.

This was the beginning of his labours ; but it must be done ; and he actually smiled when he recollected how very few of the persons whose suffrages he was now going to solicit were even known to him by name. Without hesitation he therefore accepted every invitation of the many which were showered upon him. All of them it would be impossible to keep ; but to avoid ungracious distinctions, he returned the same answer to every one, and trusted to his own address for avoiding the most disagreeable, and still not giving offence.

This sort of provincial tour promised him very little amusement ; but popularity-hunt-

ing had become his second nature, and now, as a means to the great end it was a matter of necessity.

The excitement attendant upon the wedding had in a few days died away, and the last of his guests having departed, Mr. Malcolm resolved to put some of his new plans into execution. Before his departure, however, one important point must be decided. Geneviève! what was to become of her during his absence? She was too old to be left alone at Camerford House with only servants for companions; and too young to accompany him on his tour of visits—he, being firmly persuaded of the judicious effect produced by shutting up young ladies, who were not grown up, out of sight, until the proper moment for their appearance had arrived.

His arrangements had, with regard to his

eldest daughter, so perfectly succeeded, that he resolved to follow exactly the same course with the youngest ; and already, dreams of the splendour to which she was destined, began to flit across his brain. Since the departure of Laura, Geneviève, who had before been comparatively overlooked, had risen to be an object of paramount interest to him. He listened to her voice and watched her steps as she passed before him, and with feelings of exultation decided that, although in a different style, she promised fully to equal her sister in grace and beauty.

Much, however, remained to be done. There was a wildness, a vivacity, about her which had not existed in Laura—an enthusiasm which might lead to ungraceful habits—and Mr. Malcolm thought little of repressing the natural freshness of heart of his young daughter, provided, her manners were

drilled down to the utmost nicety; for his fastidious eye and ear could not bear the slightest imperfection.

With Laura he had never had any difficulty: she seemed instinctively to fall into his ideas. From the moment when, at seventeen, he had withdrawn her from her *pension* near Paris, where her education had been completed, he had never had to criticise or condemn the smallest of her movements. She was grace itself; and the idea of further improvement seemed to him preposterous.

Under such able guidance, he felt that Geneviève was safe, and the two sisters were therefore left to each other's society, without the infliction of a governess. Masters of all kinds were, of course, liberally supplied, and both girls having a natural turn for all the accomplishments so ornamental

to female education, he had no reason to complain of any want of proficiency in his children.

The case was now altered. Removed from the example of Laura, Geneviève might become careless, and Mr. Malcolm shuddered to think what would be his sufferings, if he should be one day forced to produce to the world a daughter whose manners were not perfection. She might stoop, take off her gloves at a wrong time, dress badly, or talk too loud—any one of which defects, together with a host of others which his paternal care anticipated, would drive him to distraction.

Decidedly, therefore, Geneviève must have a governess. In a very few days, not only did he come to this important decision, but the person destined to fill the post was actually selected. Mr. Malcolm, was one

of those persons never at a loss for anything—even if he did not want it, at that moment, he took the measure of its full value, in case an hour ever should arrive when it might be useful.

This habit of forethought and vigilance had often served him at need, and in this instance it saved him a world of trouble. Out of the many all-accomplished ladies, who had been unhesitatingly recommended to him by his particular friends, as eligible companions for his daughter, he immediately selected one who, he imagined would fully answer his purpose. She had long held the same position in a family of his acquaintance, and in committing his daughter to her charge, he felt he need be under no further anxiety for the formation of her manners.—He immediately wrote to the lady in question, received a favourable

reply to his offers of emolument, and everything was finally arranged, without Geneviève having the slightest idea of the penance about to be inflicted upon her.

The days, however, wore on, and on that preceding the arrival of the new governess, it became necessary to inform her of the fact. For the first time in his life, when about to issue his orders to his children, Mr. Malcolm hesitated. He felt, although without quite acknowledging it to himself, that he was dealing a heavy blow, where it was least expected. He might, it is true, have prepared the mind of Geneviève, for the idea of the *surveillance* to which she was in future to be subjected, but that was contrary to his habits. Very absolute in the management of his family, he never either asked advice, or altered a resolution, and it was therefore, with a sensation of surprise,

that he confessed to himself, the unusual reluctance he felt in communicating his instructions to his child.

Time, however, did not admit of delay, and soon after breakfast, on the day in question, Mr. Malcolm, retiring to his library, rang the bell and desired Geneviève to be sent to him. In a few moments she appeared. Hastily summoned, she had flown to obey her father's commands, and had not given a thought to her appearance. Her hair was out of curl, her muslin gown crumpled, and on her hands she wore a large pair of loose gloves, which gave evident signs of her having been grubbing in the earth.

A look of disgust overspread the fine features of Mr. Malcolm. She could not have chosen a worse moment for such a display of rustic pursuits—he felt all his scruples vanish in a moment.

“Geneviève,” he said coldly, almost sternly, “what have you been doing?”

“Only digging in the conservatory, Papa,” replied Geneviève, with the utmost simplicity.

“Digging in the conservatory! And were there no gardeners to do such work?” asked Mr. Malcolm, in a tone of surprise.

“Oh, yes, Papa,” answered Geneviève. “There were two men besides Davidson, there, but they were all settling the geraniums.”

“And since when, may I ask, have you condescended to share their labours?”

“Only lately, Papa—only a few days,” said Geneviève, hesitatingly, as if oppressed by some disagreeable recollection; and then added, as if she thought some explanation necessary—“only since Laura went away.”

“Ah! I thought so,” replied Mr. Mal-

colm, quickly. “Poor dear Laura!—She never would have dreamt of doing such work! She never would have had such hands.”

And, with a gesture of annoyance, he pointed to the great dirty gloves, adding, as the recollection of the slender rose-tipped fingers of his absent daughter arose in judgment against poor Geneviève—“a pretty state, truly, they will be in, for playing on the harp.”

“They are dirty, Papa, indeed,” said Geneviève, timidly; “and I am sorry I did not stop to take off my gloves before I came into your room; but I could not help it—they were Laura’s flowers—*her* flowers—and I could not bear any one to touch them. When I saw Davidson, with his great spade, digging near them, it seemed as if they were hurting *her* things—her favourite

things, and I begged of him to leave them to me. I would take *such* care of them!" she added, in a lower tone.

"Yes," replied Mr. Malcolm, somewhat softened by these words, "and it is very kind and grateful in you to remember your dear sister's things: but I cannot have you, for that or any other reason, neglect yourself. You are no longer a child, Geneviève—you will be fifteen next month, and it is high time you should attend to your personal appearance. It is of the greatest possible importance to a woman. If you run about in the sun without your bonnet, and work with your hands till they are as large and red as a kitchenmaid's, how can you expect ever to make such a match as your sister has made?"

Poor Geneviève looked so totally uninterested by this prospective danger, that it evi-

vidently had very little effect ; but she held up her little white hand, and seeing that there were not, as she feared, any specks of earth upon it, she laid the offending gloves upon the chair and drawing a very tolerably clean pair of grey kid from the pocket of her black silk apron, she deliberately put them on, saying as she did so—

“ Yes, Papa, of course, anything you like I will do.”

This submissive tone augured well for the communication he was about to make ; but still, Mr. Malcolm did not feel quite comfortable about it. He could easily enter into the feelings of a young girl who had always enjoyed an undue proportion of liberty, being suddenly placed under control. He, however, assumed a very well satisfied air, and, leaning back carelessly in his chair, began to cut the leaves of a new book with an

ivory paper-knife, which had been lying on the small table close to him—

“Yes, my child,” he resumed, as if in answer to the last observation of Geneviève, “I am quite sure of it. I have never, thank God! had to complain of any want of duty or affection in either of my children; but you see, I cannot always exactly attend to all these things as I could wish. Now, that I have lost poor Laura, I have no one to help me.”

“I am sure, Papa, anything I can do, shall be most gladly done,” said Geneviève, affectionately. “I know I cannot supply Laura’s place—nobody could do that,” she added in a trembling voice; “but I should be glad to be of use—so glad to help you, Papa.”

And she drew nearer and nearer, as she spoke, and looked wistfully up in her father’s

face—There were tears glistening in her dark blue eyes, and she longed to throw her arms round his neck ; but she did not dare.

Mr. Malcolm gave no encouragement by his manner to any outpourings of the heart. He hated scenes, and anxiously repressed all outward symptoms of sensibility. He was afraid that Geneviève was going to cry, and, rising hastily from his chair, took two or three turns up and down the room, then stopping opposite the looking-glass, ran his fingers carelessly through his clustering black hair, and went on—

“ Ah, yes ! poor dear Laura—her loss is really dreadful—but we shall see her soon, I hope—I have promised to go to Manner-
ing Park at Christmas—But I have no end of things to do before that—tribes of people to visit, and troubles of all sorts about this

county business. I shall not be at home at all, all this autumn."

"Am I to go with you, Papa?" said Geneviève, timidly, for it was the first time she had heard a word of Mr. Malcolm's going away.

"No, my love—certainly not!" he instantly replied; "I cannot have you pay any visits, or be seen any more, until you come out. But, that you may not be dull here, all alone, I have got some one to help you."

"Oh, Papa!" said Geneviève, quickly, "do not ask any one for me—I want nothing at all. Mrs. Leigh and Mary will get me everything, and I can do all my lessons by myself—just as I used to do with Laura. Papa, cannot you trust me? you said I had ceased to be quite a child."

And the voice of Geneviève died away in a slight tone of reproach.

“It is for that very reason, my dear child,” said Mr. Malcolm, with more kindness in his manner than he had yet shown; “you are too old to be left with servants. Mrs. Leigh is an excellent woman, but she is not fit for your companion. I desire your education to be as perfect as art can make it, and I have therefore engaged a person to superintend it, of whom I have the highest opinion.”

“A governess?” inquired Geneviève, looking aghast at this unexpected disclosure.

“Yes. And I hope she will be pleased with you, Geneviève, and remain with you until you come out.”

The prospect of the two years before her, was anything but pleasing to poor Gene-

viève—but upon that point she said nothing. In a few moments she ventured to inquire—

“Is she English or French, Papa?”

“French, of course—Madame Tomasset is the person that I have selected. She has been several years with Lady Norcliffe, and is, without any exception, the most lady-like, well-mannered governess I ever saw. Lady Norcliffe’s daughters are charming, and they have been totally left to her charge. I don’t know anything more perfect than their manner to their mother’s guests, whenever they are called upon to assist her in her reception of company.”

“Papa,” said Geneviève, who, instead of duly profiting by this panegyric on Madame Tomasset and her former pupils, had allowed her thoughts to wander far away—
“if I am to have a French Governess, why

not send for Sister Angelique from the convent? I am sure she would come—and you have often said her manners were perfect. She was so kind to us both—and so fond of Laura. I should like to have some one that knew Laura—I am sure I should be very happy with Sister Angelique—I should not plague her now, as I used to do when I was a child. Papa, will you think about it?”

“I have thought about it. She was the first person I did think of,” said Mr. Malcolm kindly. “But there is an objection—an insuperable objection: Sister Angelique is a Roman Catholic;” and Mr. Malcolm looked disturbed, for at his forthcoming election the “No Popery!” cry sounded by anticipation in his ears.

“But, indeed, she never interfered with us,” remonstrated Geneviève, in a suppli-

cating tone. “At the *pension* we had our own church, and our own clergyman, just the same as here. No one ever tried to convert us, or talked to us about religion at all; and particularly Sister Angelique, who had so much to do. I am sure she would be just the same here.”

“It is quite impossible, Geneviève,” said her father decidedly. “Madame Tomasset, besides her other qualifications, is a strict Protestant. You would not wish to injure me, dear child,” he continued, in his blandest tone. “And when you are the county member’s daughter—which I hope will very soon be—you might do so, were it known by the lower orders that you were in close connection with a Catholic—a sort of nun, too. They would take it up directly, and might give me a great deal of trouble. It is not my own objection that I urge, for I

have no prejudices ; but some people are very particular upon this point : you understand, Geneviève ?”

“ Perfectly, papa,” answered she, somewhat flattered, that anything she could do could be of use to the political views of her father. “ I will try and do every thing you wish.”

“ Then, you will receive your new governess graciously, and not make her uncomfortable at first starting. Recollect, that all these arrangements are very troublesome to me, and, once made, I expect they will not be disturbed.”

“ No, papa—certainly not ; I will do all I can. But——”

“ But what ?” suggested Mr. Malcolm, somewhat impatiently, and sitting down again to his book.

“ She will always be here,” answered Ge-

neviève with a sob, “and prevent us loving each other;” and overcome by the unwelcome idea, and the sudden fading away of brighter visions, she laid her head upon the shoulder of her father, and burst into tears.

“Nonsense, nonsense, child,” said Mr. Malcolm, getting up from his chair abruptly, and not displeased at the termination of an interview he had somewhat dreaded. “Who should prevent our loving each other?”

And with an affection he had not yet displayed, he drew his daughter towards him, and pressed his lips to her burning cheek.

“There, now, be a good girl, Geneviève, and go out and take a walk. I have no time to talk more, for I have letters to write. Now do go out; for you are making your eyes quite red. I shall be sorry if you don’t look your best at dinner—several people dine here—and there isn’t much

time. I forgot to say," he added, carelessly turning to the writing-table, "Madame Tomasset comes to-morrow."

CHAPTER V.

AND duly the next morning, Madame Tomasset arrived. She was, as Mr. Malcolm had described her, a perfectly lady-like woman, faultless in manner and address, and possessed of all those graceful little attractions of civility and apparent good nature, which seem innate in so many of her countrywomen. To a stranger it would have appeared impossible to dislike her. To Geneviève, too deeply interested to take a cursory view of the matter, a far different impression was conveyed.

“ I shall never like her,” was the abrupt decision which she whispered to herself, as she retired to her room, on the evening of the eventful day which had thus so unexpectedly brought her far from welcome guest. It was rather soon to come to such a positive conclusion ; but Genviève had keen feelings, and it hurt her to see the place of one she loved almost to adoration, so instantly supplied by a total stranger. She forgot how much of truth there was in the words of her father, “ that now Laura was gone, he had no one to help him.” Young and thoughtless, she had not calculated the various difficulties and inconveniences the charge of a half grown-up girl, like her, might entail upon a man in his position.

She had dreamed a bright dream—a dream of being all-in-all to her father—of

tending him, of cheering him, and laying at his feet all that boundless stock of devotion which her warm heart longed to offer. That heart had been sorely wounded. Deprived of her sister, she had mourned with exceeding grief, and to her father's bosom she had turned for comfort and support. These had been denied to her. The world had interposed its cold laws—its fictitious wants, between her and a parent's heart, and she had been given over to a stranger.

This was the reading which Geneviève gave to the affair. Her sweet dream of bliss had vanished. How could she then *love* the destroyer of her hopes? She might obey ; but to love was not possible. Her little rebellious heart had already pronounced the decree, and the more she reflected on it, the more she persuaded herself of the soundness of her doctrine.

She did not blame her father : she was too dutiful to do that, even in thought ; but she felt estranged from him—worst of all, she felt as if he did not love her. She was wrong there, for Mr. Malcolm did love her, nearly as well as he was capable of loving any one in the world ; but the impression was a bad one, and likely to produce a blighting effect upon a nature like hers. It shut up in her heart its tenderest emotions, and induced habits of reserve which might easily degenerate into insincerity.

With no one to love, she had no one in whom she wished to confide, and many a thought was thus buried in her own breast, which maturer advice, or a more enlightened mind might have enlarged, or directed to a higher object. Her mind was therefore pretty nearly left to itself, and her new preceptress seeing how little real confidence

her pupil reposed in her, contented herself with fulfilling merely those duties which, strange to say, had been the only ones specially dwelt upon in her engagement, by the father of Geneviève.

Madame Tomasset was a perfect martinet as far as education was concerned. Nothing, in her eyes, could atone for half-an-hour's neglect of any of the various accomplishments she deemed so necessary to the welfare of the young ladies under her charge. She was one of those "ladies accustomed to tuition" whose whole soul is divided between copy-books and practising; and though too well bred to worry about it, the plans she, immediately upon her arrival, laid down for the daily routine of business, conveyed to Geneviève the very agreeable impression that, so long as her new governess remained in the house, her own life would

be little different from that of a school-girl.

This was a terrible blow to the romantic view she had endeavoured in her mind to give to the circumstances of her first separation from Laura. A dull reality was substituted for it. Instead of the long hours being passed in writing interminable letters to that beloved sister—in tending her flowers, or in the more active occupation of devoting herself to her father—following his steps, and sharing his every joy and sorrow—Geneviève found herself once more immured in a school-room, with little or no time to herself, except that which was set apart for the daily walk or ride.

Even in these, Madame Tomasset always accompanied her. One of her most bounden duties, she declared, was never to lose sight of her charge; and in this, perhaps, she was

not particularly to blame, although she might have exercised her watchfulness in a manner a little less irksome to the feelings of her pupil.

Geneviève, however, would not complain. She had promised her father that she would do everything she could to please him ; and his parting injunction to her had been, “ to do exactly what Madame Tomasset desired.”

So Geneviève toiled and studied, as though her very existence depended upon her labours ; and with the one hope held out to her as an incentive, “ that Mr. Malcolm would find her excessively improved upon his return,” she was forced to be contented.

There was one person, however, within the walls of Camerford House who was not quite so passive under the iron rule of the new governess. Poor Mrs. Leigh took it

dreadfully to heart. She had watched over Geneviève from her birth, and looked upon her almost as her especial property. All her little moments of pleasure were now at an end. There were no passing visits to the store-room, or comfortable cups of tea in the old nursery, when Geneviève came in tired from her ride. The stately Madame Tomasset knew too well how to keep her place; and Mrs. Leigh was banished back to her housekeeper's room—she soon having ascertained that her wanderings elsewhere were not acceptable.

“Well, to be sure!” she would say to herself, as preparing to go her rounds of an evening, she adjusted her everlasting red shawl; “if there isn't that poor darling child a-playing on the harp at this hour of the night—shut up like any bird in a cage; she that used to be in and out like a bee on

a summer's day ! Well, I suppose it's all right ; but *I* never saw no good come of their fine French education. Thank God I'm English—true English—and never had no fine Frenchwoman to teach *me* manners. Well-a-day ! here's a change to be sure. Who'd have thought of all this coming of Miss Laura's grand marriage !”

CHAPTER VI.

WHILE his gentle daughter was thus undergoing a species of refined martyrdom at home, Mr. Malcolm was actively engaged in the furtherance of his new scheme, and in a short time had made considerable progress in his canvass of the county.

He, as yet, could form no very decided opinion as to his ultimate chance of success, for he was a man too calculating and reflecting to be led away by the flowery protestations of some few adherents and intimate friends, who would not allow a doubt

to be entertained. Mr. Malcolm smiled and listened, but he had a great many doubts. In his own mind he felt convinced, that he had started on the wrong side. Liberal opinions were decidedly the order of the day, and he had announced himself as a Conservative.

Now, he cared very little which side he took, for he had no principles, and took no real interest in political affairs. But he had friends—influential friends—in the party to which he had attached himself, and he had also hopes and expectations—although to no mortal ear had they been confided.

It would have been madness, just then, to have taken the popular side. His mania, too, was to be supposed to belong to that class with which he so exclusively associated; and, by adopting the exact tenets

of his friends, he hoped to be identified with them.

In this, he was eminently successful. He had lived so long with a certain set of people, that no one thought of asking from whence he had originally come. And yet, if any one had asked the question, no one could have conscientiously answered it, for no one exactly knew the truth.

He had bought the beautiful estate, and Camerford House, many years before, and had immediately taken possession of it. It was then announced to the curious, that he was a young man very well connected, and of Scottish descent, who had extensive property in some one of the Colonies. This vague account was pretty nearly all that was ever known of his affairs ; and, as there were few persons whom it concerned nearly enough, to make it worth their while to dive

into secret histories which might in the end prove very uninteresting, thus the matter was suffered to remain.

It might, however, have afforded food for conjecture, had any one been sufficiently observant to note the total absence of relations amongst the troops of friends and acquaintances which the gay and hospitable owner of Camerford House always contrived to gather around him. In spite of his high-sounding name, not one of the noble houses with whom he might have been supposed to claim kindred, ever hailed him as their own—no, not even one Scotch cousin ever made his appearance within his walls.

He seemed actually to have dropped from the clouds. Some few foreigners—connections of his wife—liad, from time to time, shown themselves; but, since her death, their visits had almost entirely ceased—and

Mr. Malcolm was left to enjoy his tranquillity undisturbed.

It was not until his name was so loudly proclaimed all over the county, as aspiring to become their representative in Parliament, that people thought of asking any questions about him. Had he been contented to remain quiet, he might have gone down to his grave as the much-honoured Edward Malcolm, of Camerford House ; but, the moment he pretended to a position which might have the effect of placing him above them, the busy and the envious were not wanting in endeavours to point out to the more unsophisticated part of the community, how little standing their new candidate possessed in the county, compared with a great many other people.

Their observations did not fail in due course of time to reach the ear of him who

was the object of them; but the kindly spirit in which they were made, seemed to have very little effect upon him. He pursued the even tenour of his way without manifesting the slightest discomposure; and, in his endeavour to make himself agreeable, so well succeeded, that most people forgot to ask questions, and did not even remember what they had heard.

As soon as it was announced that he intended to visit every one in the county, a host of new acquaintances had received him with open arms. He hunted with the gentlemen, drove out with the elder ladies, and danced with the younger ones, and had no reason to complain that popularity was difficult to obtain. The round of visits to which he had devoted his autumn, was, however, drawing to a close; and, sated with flattery and attentions, Mr. Malcolm was not sorry

to take refuge once more within his own immediate circle, and escape from the somewhat wearying life his newly-formed aspirations had forced him to lead.

Christmas was near, and he had promised to spend it at Mannering Park—a promise, to the fulfilment of which, he looked forward with no little degree of pleasure. He was, however, not the only person by whom the arrival of Christmas was anticipated with unfeigned delight. The young heart of Geneviève seemed to count the moments by its pulsations. No school-boy ever watched for the happy day when the holidays were to commence, with more intense anxiety than did the poor girl, who saw in the promised visit to her sister, her only chance of escaping for a short time from the thralldom in which she was held.

But even this very natural feeling was

weak, when compared to the fullness of the joy which filled her heart, at the prospect of being once again with Laura. Her affectionate nature, pent up within the narrow limits of conventional propriety, longed for that free and unrestrained interchange of thought and feeling which latterly had been denied to her ; and she looked forward to many happy hours, and confidential conversations, when they would be again all in all to each other, and every secret of her mind should be laid bare to that beloved sister, to whom she looked up with the fondness and reverence of a child.

The much longed-for day at length arrived, and Geneviève, bidding adieu to her governess, who on her side was also going to pay a visit to some friends, took her seat in the carriage which was to convey her and Mr. Malcolm to Mannering Park. It was a

tiresome day's journey, but she did not think of the fatigue, and when at last the long-wished-for gates appeared in view, and the carriage swept up the magnificent old avenue that led to the house, her heart beat almost audibly, so great was her emotion.

Everything she saw appeared to her most beautiful, nor was she very wrong in the rapid decision to which she came, upon the first view of Mannering Park. It was a fine old-fashioned place, a little formal, but this fault was redeemed by the splendid woods, and some fine, rising ground in the distance. The house—a gothic building—was large, with beautiful pleasure-grounds laid out all round it, and extending to a lake, of which very pretty glimpses were obtained by the judicious opening of the woods.

It had the air of a place well taken care

of, and belonging to a rich man, and this was exactly the impression which the first view of it conveyed to the practised eye of Mr. Malcolm, as he drove through the park. A smile of self-complacency lighted up his handsome face, for the marriage had been one of his favourite schemes, and he was always excessively proud of his own success.

It was almost the dinner hour when they reached the house. Lady Mannering, with affectionate solicitude, hurried into the hall to receive her father and sister, but Sir Aubrey had not yet returned from hunting. They had, therefore, a short time to themselves, to the great delight of Geneviève, for there were already several people staying in the house, and other guests were expected.

Those who formed the family circle con-

sisted of Mrs. Pringle, who was aunt to Sir Aubrey Mannering, Doctor Radcliffe, his chaplain, with Lord Eardley and Mr. Delmaine—two gentlemen devoted to the chase, and his constant companions.

In due time, the fox-hunters returned from their day's sport, dinner was soon after announced, and then Mr. Malcolm had leisure to look around him, and examine everything and every person that came within his reach. He was perfectly satisfied with his survey—everything betokened both care and riches; the room in which they sat was splendid—the servants were numerous, and well appointed, and the side-board groaned under the weight of its old and massive plate.

It was the first time Mr. Malcolm had ever been at Mannering Park, but he was not long in deciding that it fully equalled his

expectations, and he congratulated himself more and more upon his own address in bringing about a marriage, which placed his favourite daughter, as he imagined, in so enviable a position.

Laura he thought was looking more beautiful than ever. The excitement of receiving her father and sister in her new house gave an additional glow to her beauty, and she seemed never to weary of displaying to their admiring eyes, the many treasures of which she had become possessed.

Sir Aubrey Mannering, had certainly not been niggardly in his wedding gifts, but he was a man fully as fond of display as Mr. Malcolm himself; and as his wife was a very prominent part of that display, he chose that she should always appear with becoming splendour. It might have been

wished, or perhaps expected, that in thus extolling the gifts, more praise or tenderness should have been extended to the donor, but except in very general terms, Laura never spoke of her husband.

Did this betoken too much affection or too little? This was a problem which after days were to solve. At the present moment nothing could be more delightful, than the total absence of all sentimentality from the manner, and it appeared from the thoughts of the young wife. Her spirits were unfailing, and her self-possession remarkable. She seemed so completely accustomed to her position that no one would have imagined it was new to her.

Sir Aubrey too, betrayed but very few of those lover-like attentions which might have been expected so soon after his marriage. He had apparently already

settled down to all his former habits and pursuits. Three or four days of the week were exclusively devoted to hunting. He returned late, and after dinner, went directly to sleep. The remaining days being generally occupied by shooting, or magisterial business, he had very few moments of leisure, and even if he had been able to command his own time, he was not a man much inclined to waste any of it in attending on his wife.

Laura had therefore, very soon made the discovery, that if apparently more independent, her life had become one of much more solitude than when living in her father's house. However mortifying such a discovery might have been to most women, it did not appear to have produced the same effect upon her, for the conduct of her husband was regarded with total

indifference, and in the contemplation of her magnificent possessions, and anticipations of London gaiety, she found ample solace for the dull hours of her country life.

Of household cares, she thought very little. She had found all things as they were, and had hitherto not had any particular reason for wishing to disturb them.

It cannot, however, be supposed, that the great precision and order which were evident in all the arrangements of Mannering Park, were the result of accident. With every appearance of carelessness and expensive habits, no one was more intensely stingy than the rich Sir Aubrey Mannering. Persuaded that his own consequence depended much upon outward show, a certain expenditure was permitted, but all was

calculated to a nicety, and beyond the line which he had laid down for himself and his household, nothing could tempt him to pass.

As a principle, this certainly could not be condemned ; but, in carrying out the details, the narrowness of his mind often became painfully apparent. There was no littleness to which he would not condescend, in order, as he called it, “to save unnecessary expense.” He, who spent thousands upon his hunters, would ride a mile round to avoid paying the turnpike. He would refrain from answering a letter to save the penny-stamp, and put out all the candles, except one, that he might economise his wax-lights.

These, with many other peculiarities of the same nature, told of the spirit within, and the undisguised contempt with which

they were treated by Lady Mannering, had been already the cause of serious annoyance to him. He was not, however, sole author of the many small devices, which, introduced into a splendid household, look like small patches of rag upon a costly cloth.

During the days of his bachelor life, he had, partly from indolence, and partly from avaricious motives, yielded himself up to other guidance than his own. Aware, that with his habits, his house was very likely to run into disorder, he had sought help where it was to be found. The vigilance of a strict and active housekeeper would have been the natural resource to which an ordinary genius would have turned; but the thrifty mind of Sir Aubrey meditated no such useless extravagance. A poor relation would do much better; there would be

no wages to pay, and the pilferings could not go on with their usual facility.

Sir Aubrey, full of his new idea, immediately counted up the members of his family, amongst whom he was likely to find the coadjutor he sought. He was not long in discovering that he, in common with most other people, had many relations and connections to whom a little countenance and support from their rich and prosperous kinsman, would be of very substantial benefit.

To all, however, of these, there appeared some insuperable objection. One was too young, another too old ; the next, too pretty, and the following one too vulgar.—Sir Aubrey began to despair—It was not so easy in a moment to find a fitting person to place at the head of a bachelor's establishment.

At length, his good fortune favoured

him, and, as if to relieve him from his embarrassments, a widowed aunt suddenly returned from India, where she had accompanied a starving husband and children in the hope of improving her position. Her expectations, however, had not been fulfilled: her husband, after some years of toil and anxiety, had just obtained a trifling legal appointment, when he was carried off by a fever, and Mrs. Pringle returned to vegetate in one of the suburbs of London, upon the interest of four thousand pounds, which had been her own fortune, and which was settled upon her and her children.

This was not much, with a family of five sons to support; and, on her arrival in England, nothing was more natural than that she should make an appeal to the generosity of her rich nephew, and lay before him the circumstances of her position.

Sir Aubrey received her letter, exactly as—in despair of finding any one to carry out his economical views—he was on the point of leaving town, to betake himself to his splendid, but extravagant abode of Manner-
ing Park. The communication filled him with delight. He felt as though a guardian angel had been sent to his succour. Immediately ordering his horse, he cantered off to find, as best he might, No. 15, New North Row, Avenue Road, Islington.

The direction was puzzling, but, by the help of policemen, omnibus drivers, and bakers' boys, he at length discovered the street—or rather lane—where dwelt the future protectress of his property. It was just the abode of a poor relation, and a very poor one—a small house, in a small row, with a small square of damp earth walled in, in front, and a bright green gate

opening on the road. Of course, there was no bell; so Sir Aubrey, giving his horse to his servant, walked into the house, the door of which stood ajar.

The scuffling of many feet announced the flight of the children, who naturally were not 'fit to be seen;' and Sir Aubrey, taking possession of the deserted room, awaited, with what patience he could command, the arrival of the mistress of the house, who, he doubted not, had been duly warned of his approach. He sat down in the little front parlour, filled with dust and flies disporting themselves in the rays of an unchecked July sun. He had full time to admire the red and white-striped paper on the wall, and the two feet of black-looking glass pinned up in yellow muslin, which ornamented the chimney-piece; but, after a very tedious quarter of an hour, Mrs. Pringle made her

appearance—a tall, gaunt-looking woman, in rusty black, with black eyes, pinched lips, and somewhat hollow cheeks.

Poor woman! she had been handsome in her youth. It may be imagined with what unfeigned joy she listened to the most unexpected proposal of her fine' nephew—“That she should send the children to school, and come and live with him, and take care of his house.”

She could scarcely believe in her senses; but Sir Aubrey, who, when his own interest was at stake, could be prompt and energetic enough, very soon convinced her of the reality of his intentions; and in a few days every preparation was complete, and Mrs. Pringle duly installed in her new office at Mannering Park.

From that hour she had not relinquished her post; and Sir Aubrey, fully satisfied

that by her habits of penury she was well fitted to carry out his views, resigned the chief management of the affairs of his household into her hands, only stipulating that, in appearance, everything should continue in its accustomed way.

This state of affairs had lasted for many years, when the rumour of Sir Aubrey's matrimonial intentions threw Mrs. Pringle into the most violent state of agitation. In vain she strained to the utmost all her most diplomatic powers, and called to her aid every stratagem she could think of, in order to wean the mind of her nephew from the fatal idea of which it had become possessed. Sir Aubrey was neither to be enticed nor frightened from following his own plan.

Obstinacy was one of the leading traits in his character. He imagined that he had come to that age when, as a married man,

he should have more weight than as a single one. A wife was a necessary part of his establishment. This, added to the dazzling beauty of Laura Malcolm, rendered vain all the efforts of Mrs. Pringle to convince him of the superior charms of a life of celibacy. He had made up his own mind, therefore he very soon made his proposals; and in due time the young Lady Mannering arrived at Mannering Park, to grace the throne hitherto occupied by the poor relation.

Mrs. Pringle was ready to sink beneath the blow. Once more she saw before her the dusty parlour in New North Row, and her heart trembled at the dreary prospect of the change. With the spite and envy of a despairing soul, she concentrated the whole force of her hatred upon the head of the offending bride. But the hour of her trial was not so near as she had anticipated.

Lady Mannering, with the most winning grace, had made it a point that no change was to take place in the arrangements of the house on her account. Her lofty spirit could ill brook the supposition that she could imagine a being like Mrs. Pringle to be in her way. Sir Aubrey, who, in spite of his love of display grudged every penny that was spent, was too happy to retain his Cerberus over his now augmented retinue. Mrs. Pringle, therefore, remained at Mannering Park.

CHAPTER VII.

THE careless nature of Laura had at first made her very inattentive to the proceedings of those around her, and therefore the petty manœuvres of the indefatigable Mrs. Pringle, to carry out her economical plans, had not created the same impression upon her mind, they were destined afterwards to produce.

On the contrary, she had, in the early days of her sovereignty at Mannering Park, been excessively amused at what she imagined to be absence of mind in her new

relation. With childish gaiety, she would sometimes seek to counteract her labours, and would steal behind her to re-light the candles on a distant table, which she concluded the absent Mrs. Pringle had inadvertently snuffed out.

At another time, she would again commit to the flames, sundry large bits of coal, which she had watched the good lady carefully picking off the top of the fire, and depositing at one side of the grate; nor could she have brought herself seriously to believe that economy was the object, when she saw Mrs. Pringle, daily after luncheon, make a collection of chicken bones and scraps of meat, and carry them to the hall-door, to be there devoured by Sir Aubrey's privileged dog 'Bruce,' the only one allowed to come in and out of the house.

A more than maternal solicitude for the

welfare of Bruce, appeared to Lady Mannering the sole motive for the uncleanly operation ; but, as Mrs. Pringle always declared “ he would eat double, if she did not feed him herself,” she concluded that some absolute necessity must have shown itself for restraining so voracious an appetite ; and, as Bruce was her husband’s favourite dog, she forbore to suggest any innovation upon the mode of his taking his repasts.

These, and many other similar proceedings, might have enlightened the mind of Lady Mannering, as to the littlenesses that are sometimes associated with grandeur, and which her narrow-minded new relations so fully exemplified. But Laura, in the full measure of her own content, was not disposed to take anything in bad part, and it is possible that Mrs. Pringle might have continued her small savings in peace and

quiet, had it not suddenly come to the knowledge of the young wife, that every one of her acts was not only countenanced, but commanded by Sir Aubrey himself. Laura could not bring herself to believe the intelligence, and it needed some circumstance which would more immediately bear upon her own private arrangements, fully to convince her of the fact.

An opportunity of this nature soon presented itself. It was a few days after the arrival of Mr. Malcolm, at Mannering Park. A large party was expected to dinner—Sir Aubrey had returned somewhat earlier than usual from hunting, and was in his dressing-room, putting the last touches to a very well-finished toilet, when he was surprised by a gentle tap at the door. It opened, and Lady Mannering, already dressed for dinner, entered the room.

There was something in the expression of her face, which struck Sir Aubrey as very unusual, but as he did not choose to provoke an explanation which possibly might not be agreeable, he made no remark, wishing rather to avert what he felt to be an impending storm.

“Laura,” he exclaimed, “what dressed already! and how well you look in that black velvet and those pearls.”

“Am I very late? It must be late if you are going down already.”

“Oh no! it is not late—no one is come yet,” replied Lady Mannerling, turning to the fire-place, and putting the candle she held on the chimney-piece, and then she added—

“But how cold it is here! And you have no fire! Dear me, how very careless of the servants to let it out.”

And she stooped to see whether it was possible to re-animate what she supposed to be the remains of a fire. To her surprise, she then perceived that it had never been lighted.

“Why, how is this?” she exclaimed.
“There has been no fire here all day.”

“I never have one,” said Sir Aubrey, coldly.

“What, not even on such a bitter night as this? It is freezing hard,” replied Lady Mannering, with a shiver.

“I know it, and I suppose now we shall have the hunting stopped,” said Sir Aubrey; “but that is no reason why I should burn all the coal in the house; coals have risen five shillings a ton this week. There is a fire in the drawing-room, I dare say. I am going down directly.”

“Had you a good run to day?” asked

Laura, turning away her head with an air of marked dissatisfaction.

“Nothing particular,” replied Sir Aubrey, brushing his hair before the glass, “though we killed two foxes.”

“And your new hunter,” said Laura, pursuing her enquiries, with all the interest she could command; “how did he go?”

“As ill as possible; he is a regular brute, and can’t gallop a yard. I must get rid of him as soon as I can. I suppose I shall contrive to lose about fifty per cent. on my bargain,” said Sir Aubrey, sulkily.

“Talking of horses,” observed Laura, as she leaned forward towards the glass over the chimney-piece, as if to examine the Camélias in her hair; “did you know that Papa’s horses and servants had all been sent to the inn at Burnham?”

“Of course, I knew it,” replied Sir Aubrey, coldly.

“All his hunters, and even Geneviève’s horse,” persisted Laura.

“Of course,” repeated Sir Aubrey; “Do you think there is anything done here without my knowledge.”

“But there was room for them here. Surely there was room enough. I took the trouble of looking over the stables myself when I heard it, and there were three stalls empty.”

“I know there are—but that is no reason I should take in other people’s horses,” said Sir Aubrey, drily.

“And why not,” asked Laura, in a tone of amazement.

“Because I don’t choose to pay for their food—hay and corn, are ruinous expenses; and besides, there are straw and beans, and

all sorts of things wanting, and the servants' living. I should be eaten out of house and home, if it wasn't for that inn."

"But papa's horses," expostulated Laura.

"I make no distinction," replied her husband, stiffly.

"Well, I must own, I think my father's and sister's horses, might be made an exception to your rules of economy," said Laura with great dignity.

"I shall make none," was the sharp answer of Sir Aubrey.

"I thought you had invited papa to come and hunt with you," observed Laura, in a somewhat tremulous tone.

"So I did, but I did not promise to feed his horses."

"You might as well have asked him to find his own dinner," cried Laura, indignantly.

“Not at all—no one ever thinks of taking in other peoples’ horses—it is never done anywhere—one might as well keep a hotel, as do such a thing—better far, for at a hotel, at least people would pay for what they get.”

“It is lucky such rules were not applied to you, when you brought your horses to Camerford House,” said Laura, proudly.

“If Mr. Malcolm chooses to be so very magnificent, I cannot help it,” said Sir Aubrey shrugging his shoulders.

“But,” replied Laura, gently, as if she was willing to try every means to remove what she imagined such a degrading idea from the mind of her husband; “Why not make an exception for papa?—If I ask it Aubrey, for my sake? He must think it very unkind,” and the tears trembled in her beautiful eyes as she looked down to conceal them.

“It is quite impossible, Lady Man-
nering; Mr. Malcolm must pay for his own
horses;” said her husband, in his most dis-
agreeable manner, for he did not like the
appeal of Laura to his feelings—where a
matter of expense was concerned, he had no
feelings except bad ones.

The brow of Laura contracted, and the
colour rose to her cheeks, as she drew her-
self up to her full height, and impetuously
answered—

“Well, I must say, Sir Aubrey, con-
sidering the way you have been always re-
ceived in *my* father’s house, and that you
have not married a beggar, your saving
propensities might have found some other
object to exercise themselves upon. I
should think my fortune would stand the
expense of feeding a few horses for a few
days.”

“Your fortune, if you please to remember,” observed Sir Aubrey, in a most cutting tone, “has never been paid. Forty thousand pounds sound very well on paper, but the reality is one thing, and the mere expectation another.”

“I really don’t know anything about it,” said Laura haughtily. “I never read the marriage settlements—I hate everything about money—and all meanness.”

“It would be well, perhaps, to take a few lessons in economy,” observed Sir Aubrey in a sententious manner.

“I need not go far for them,” replied Laura, with a sneer. “Between you and Mrs. Pringle, my education in the saving system could soon be completed.”

“My Aunt Margaret is a most worthy woman,” said Sir Aubrey, solemnly, for he was touched to the quick by this ill-judged

attack on his fac-totum; "and a most excellent example in all things," he added, with a warning look at his beautiful wife, whose cheeks were still glowing with her unwonted emotion.

"Oh! quite perfect, I have no doubt, even to the pattern of her cap. I suppose I must ask her leave before I think of ordering a new one," was the petulant reply, and she hastily took up her candle and quitted the room, in order to hide the tears of vexation and disappointment which she was too proud to show.

CHAPTER VIII.

VERY bitter were the tears that burst from the eyes of Laura, as she hurried back to her own apartments, and locked herself in. Anger and shame, sorrow and disgust, were all blended together, and struggled respectively for mastery, as she recalled to her mind every word of the conversation which had just taken place between herself and her husband.

All her most tender feelings had been outraged by it. Her affection for her father and sister led her particularly to resent any slight shown to them ; and in her inexpe-

rience of the ways of people in general, she could not help feeling as if a very serious insult had been purposely offered to them.

Had Sir Aubrey condescended to explain more minutely all the rules and regulations of his household, and quoted precedents of unquestionable authority for such very economical arrangements, she might have better understood the matter, although, to entertain his view of it, would have been an impossibility to her.

With all her faults, she was neither stingy nor avaricious ; and, as she was certain the practice in question had been unknown in her father's house, and that she had never troubled herself to inquire what went on in those of other people, she settled in her own mind that the idea was a joint emanation from the brains of Sir Aubrey and his economical relation, Mrs. Pringle.

There could not have been a more unfortunate combination for the peace of mind of Laura. She felt immediately as if she was no longer to be mistress in her own house. Her matronly dignity quickly took alarm, and feelings sprung to life in her bosom against Sir Aubrey and his invaluable aunt, of which a day earlier she would not have been capable.

Her disappointment was extreme. She was disappointed in everything—but most especially in her husband. He had suddenly revealed himself in no very amiable light; thwarted her wishes, and virtually acknowledged in his house a higher authority than her own. The recollection of his words and manner galled her to the quick, and for some minutes she wept unrestrainedly.

Unfortunately, however, the hour at

which all this occurred, did not admit of her indulging her grief in the long silence and solitude she felt that she required. The imperative call of the dinner hour was close at hand, and, in a few minutes, the gentle voice of Geneviève was heard demanding admittance.

Without drying her eyes, Laura hastily opened the door, and the tears bedewed her cheek, as she sat down again by the fire.

“Laura, dear Laura, what is the matter?” said the astonished Geneviève,—for grief was a very unusual expression on the beautiful face of her sister.

“Oh! nothing, Geveviève—at least, nothing we can help—nothing you can help me in,” she replied—for she did not like to tell her sister the disagreeable fact of which she was sure she was ignorant.

“Yes, but I am certain I could help

you," said Geneviève, tenderly. "I am quite sure I could—only tell me. At all events, I could comfort you, poor darling."

And she took one of Laura's hands, and passed it round her own neck.

"Only tell me," she continued, nestling up to her side.

A burst of tears was the only reply.

"Laura, don't cry so," said Geneviève, "I can't bear it—what can be the matter? You must not cry so," she added vehemently, as her own eyes filled with tears.

"Oh! Geneviève," said Laura, unable to resist the kind, soft manner of her sister. "You don't know how miserable I am."

And she laid her head fondly on the round, white shoulder of Geneviève, whose arm now encircled her waist.

"Don't say that, Laura, my own darling, why should you be unhappy; you at least

have no one to make you unhappy," said Geneviève, with a little sigh, as she thought of the enviable position of her sister, and her own servitude to the indefatigable Madame Tomasset at home.

"Oh! yes I have, though," cried Laura, impetuously. "There is that odious Mrs. Pringle. It is Mrs. Pringle who has made Aubrey so unkind."

"Unkind! Aubrey unkind! and to you, Laura," said Geneviève, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, unkind, cruel," sobbed Laura. "What do you think they have done between them? They have actually turned out Papa's horses and servants, and sent them to the inn at Burnham. And your horse too, your poor Saladin, turned out of our stables—of *my* stables, and without even telling me a word about it," and a

fresh burst of tears showed how genuine was the distress she felt.

“Turned them out?” exclaimed Geneviève, with a look of surprise, and then added quickly: “oh! not turned them out, only sent them to the inn. Perhaps there was no room; Aubrey has a great many hunters.

“But there was room,” cried Laura, “plenty of room; and if there had not been, why not send away some of the carriage horses—any, except poor papa’s. I cannot bear the thought.”

“But why was it done?” asked Geneviève, simply.

“Why! what do you think? Just to save the wretched bit of food they would have eaten. Oh Geneviève, how I do hate such meanness. It does disgust me so. I feel as if I could never look any one in the

face again. But it is all that odious Mrs. Pringle's doing. I know it is."

"I am sure Aubrey never could have thought of such a thing himself," said Genèviève eagerly, and hoping to divert the anger of Laura from her husband.

"I don't know—I think not—I hope not," said Laura, sadly, for she knew the charitable suggestion of her sister to be utterly devoid of foundation.

"At all events," continued Genèviève, "it does not much signify. The horses will do very well at the inn, and if it is by way of economy, Papa will only laugh at it. You know what a joke he always makes at home of what he calls Madame Tomasset's *économie de bouts de chandelles*."

"Ah, yes — but Madame Tomasset's savings are very different from Mrs. Pringle's," said Laura, with a sneer.

“I should think so, indeed,” cried Geneviève, recovering her spirits; “for it is such fun watching her. She picks up every bit of paper and every bit of thread she can find upon the floor, and even pins. She has got a great pincushion, the shape of a heart, in her pocket, and I believe she contrives to fill it every day.”

“What a woman,” said Laura, with a sigh.

“And yet Aubrey calls her ‘dear Aunt Margaret.’ I wonder how any one can call her dear, I am sure.”

“It would be long before I should do so,” muttered Laura; and a shiver passed over the ivory shoulders of the fair speaker, as she bent her head downwards.

“Oh, she is not worth thinking about,” said the peace-making Geneviève; “and I am sure the cap she puts on, on company days,

ought to be punishment enough for all her sins. Did you ever see such a thing? It is like the Tower of Babel. And to-day she has changed her flowers, and put red roses into it, and long red strings. Oh, she is so fine."

"Horrid woman," murmured Laura.

"Oh! horrid enough. But perhaps she doesn't mean any harm, after all," suggested Geneviève, whose kind heart never could bear to cast serious blame upon any one—"and her fashions, I suppose, were brought from India."

"If she had but stayed there," ejaculated Laura.

"It would have been a thousand pities—I never should have seen the cap and the heart pincushion—And I know plenty of other things besides, but I haven't time to tell you now," said Geneviève, gaily—"But

indeed, we must go down to the drawing-room," she added; "every one will wonder where you are."

"Oh! no one will miss me—Mrs. Pringle is there," replied Laura, in a tone of pique.

"Laura, how can you be so foolish," remonstrated Geneviève; "as if that woman was worth minding. Aubrey only keeps her here to do the housekeeping business. He always gives her his keys to keep when he goes out hunting."

"They could not be trusted to his wife, of course," observed Laura.

"Well, I dare say you would lose them," answered Geneviève, laughing; "I should like to see you with a great bunch hanging to your side, like 'dear Aunt Margaret!' but do Laura come down now; your poor eyes are a little red still—put some rose-water to

them, and let me settle your hair. You have spoilt your beautiful white camelia; there is a leaf out."

"Oh! it don't signify," said Laura, with a sigh.

"Yes, yes, it does—it quite spoils the shape. Let me put in another; here is a very pretty red one," replied Geneviève, unfastening the broken flower from Laura's hair, as she spoke. In a few moments the arrangement was completed, and Laura having, in some degree, removed the traces of emotion from her face, both sisters descended to the drawing-room, where by this time all the expected guests had assembled.

The sound of many voices recalled her somewhat to herself, and the remembrance of her duties, but her equanimity was but partially restored, when it was again upset by perceiving that Sir Aubrey, in a corner

of the room, was in close conversation with the detested Mrs. Priugle. The Pyramid of red roses was going up and down with fearful velocity. Doubtless it was a weighty matter that was under discussion. The irritation of Laura returned tenfold, and it was in no very enviable mood that she sat down to dinner.

CHAPTER IX.

THE great injustice that may be committed against a person or persons who have fallen under our displeasure, is seldom thought of by irritable people. In the height of her indignation, Laura never for an instant contemplated the possibility of her or her affairs not having been the subject of the private conversation of Sir Aubrey and his aunt. She had settled in her own mind that they were talking of her.

It so happened, however, that, on this occasion she was totally mistaken. The

simple fact was, that the eternally soliciting Mrs. Pringle had received an unexpected answer to one of her communications, which required an immediate reply. The letter had come just before dinner. It contained the offer of a naval cadetship for one of her five sons ; and as the delay of a post might be of consequence, she had, on the earliest opportunity, seized upon Sir Aubrey Mannering, to consult him upon the subject.

The conference was drawing to a close just at the moment that Laura entered the room ; but she only saw, in the sudden separation of the consulting parties, a wish to avoid her observation ; and her spirit revolted against the duplicity which, she imagined, was being practised against her.

The more she dwelt upon her suspicions, the more they became confirmed ; and the suffering which her own thoughts entailed

upon her, gave to her manner a nervousness and hurry which was very unusual to it.

Those among her guests who were strangers to her might not have observed it ; but to any one familiar with her habits, and the peculiar *aplomb* which was naturally and gracefully blended with every thing she said and did, it was strikingly apparent.

The practised eye of Mr. Malcolm instantly detected it ; nor was he slow in pretty nearly divining its cause. It needed but little of his usual tact, when he came into the drawing-room after dinner, to disengage his daughter from her surrounding guests, and seat himself by her side, at a convenient distance from the rest of the company. Very soon, she had confided to his ear the cause of her sorrow, and poured forth the unmeasured disgust with which the stinginess of Sir Aubrey and the meddling of Mrs. Pringle had filled her mind.

“ You take it too seriously, my dear child,” said Mr. Malcolm, in a cheerful tone ; for he was much relieved by finding the subject of her annoyance to be so little important. “ Why vex yourself about such a trifle ?”

“ But it is not a trifle, papa,” replied Laura ; “ it cannot be a trifle to me to see you slighted.”

“ But if I do not see the affair in the same light, why insist on my being offended ? After all, it does not signify where the horses are ; the inn at Burnham is a very good one.”

“ I dare say it is, papa ; but it is the spirit of the thing that I cannot endure. And then, that odious Mrs. Pringle’s interference. Would you believe it, papa—she meddles in every thing ; and advises Aubrey, in all his money concerns—actually keeps his keys ! Now, is it not hard ?”

“What ! that she should keep the keys ? No—I should think it a blessing,” said Mr. Malcolm, laughing.

“Papa—how can you laugh at any thing so serious,” said Laura, fretfully.

“But why make it serious, Laura ?” persisted her father. “For my part, I think I could endure her at Camerford House, red roses and all, if she would only keep my keys. But, Laura, when are you coming to see the old house again ? you really must pay us a visit.”

“I am sure I don’t know,” answered Laura. “As long as there is any hunting, I don’t see a chance of moving Aubrey from this.”

“Why ! he talked of going to town in February,” observed Mr. Malcolm.

“Yes, but he will never do it—Mrs. Pringle will find out it is more expensive than staying here,” said Laura.

“At all events, he will go up at Easter,” said Mr. Malcolm, consolingly.

“I wish Easter was come, then—I am sick of staying here. How I long to see London and its dear gas-lights once more—and to have my opera-box, and wear all my diamonds! I am quite tired of looking at them in their cases”—and the fair face of Laura brightened a little.

“You must let Geneviève come and stay with me, Papa,” she added, still pursuing the train of ideas the word ‘London’ had conjured up —“we shall have plenty of room for her in that great house in Grosvenor Square—and she will look so pretty in my barouche. Do you know, Papa, I think Lord Eardley admires her exceedingly. There would be a match for her!”

“For Heaven’s sake, Laura,” said the prudent parent, “do not put such an idea

into her head, now. At her age, nothing would come of it—she is too giddy, and would never make up her mind, even if he were to propose. And, as to her going to you, my darling Laura, you must know it is quite impossible—she must not be seen for the next year and a half, at least.

“She does not seem more reconciled to Madame Tomasset than she was at first,” observed Laura; “and yet how wonderfully she has got her on. I never heard any one’s singing so much improved. She is a better governess than I was,” added Laura, with a smile.

“Poor Geneviève does not think so. But Madame Tomasset is certainly a most accomplished woman, and a very dragon of propriety.”

“She would do with Mrs. Pringle, then,” observed Laura; “she is always preaching

against what she calls 'the manners of the day.' Levity and extravagance are two words that are never out of her mouth ;" and Laura laughed outright.

"My dear child," said Mr. Malcolm, delighted to see her returning spirits, "do leave that old woman alone. Look upon her as a necessary infliction, and never mind her. You don't know the harm she might do you, if you make an enemy of her. You had much better have her as a friend."

"Friend !" echoed Laura, sitting suddenly upright on the sofa, and looking at her father full in the face. "Papa, you are surely joking !"

"No, I am not," said Mr. Malcolm, who for once spoke the truth from his heart. "She is very well worth enduring. Her position is an unusual one. It is always well to adapt oneself to circumstances.

Take my advice, and don't quarrel with her."

"Oh! she may go on picking up the pins with all my heart," answered Laura, with a sneer, which spoke little cordiality.

"Don't be a child, Laura, but keep your eyes about you. You may have difficult people to deal with. Recollect you don't know one of them thoroughly yet."

Mr. Malcolm spoke these words almost in a whisper, and as he said them he rose from the sofa, where he had been sitting by his daughter, and sauntered towards the whist-table, at which two stately dowagers, in turbans of gold and silver gauze, were seated with their chosen partners.

The vacant place by the side of Laura was instantly filled by Lord Eardley, who said as he sat down—

"Lady Mannering, why did you not honour

us at the meet to-day?—you half promised that you would.”

“Well, I don’t exactly know,” answered Laura; “I suppose I was lazy—It is hard work setting out so early.”

“But you never come now,” observed Lord Eardley, reproachfully.

“Never! How can you say so, Lord Eardley? Once this week, twice last week—why! I have done nothing but hunt, it seems to me.”

“And it seems to me that you *never* come,” said Lord Eardley, lowering his voice, and looking very sentimental. “Do say you will come to-morrow?”

“Well, I don’t know about that,” replied Laura, laughing; “I think I shall take to some serious occupation, and not spend my time galloping all over the country.”

“Then I shall certainly give up hunting,”

said Lord Eardley, fixing his dark eyes on the lovely face of Lady Mannering, which was again glowing with its usual animation.

“And, besides,” she continued, affecting a solemn air, “Mrs. Pringle doesn’t approve of ladies hunting.—She says it was never the fashion in *her* time.”

“I should think not, indeed,” said Lord Eardley—“Fancy her going over a fence in that flaming cap. I should die of it.”

“So would she, most likely,” said Laura, laughing heartily at the idea.

“How beautifully your sister rides,” observed Lord Eardley, after a moment’s pause.

“Does she not,” exclaimed Laura—“And that pretty Saladin, he bounds over every thing, like a deer.”

“She sits upon her horse like a Grecian statue,” said Lord Eardley, who piqued

himself upon his taste; "I never saw so graceful a seat—except yours," he added, in a low voice.

"Oh, Geneviève rides better than I do," said Laura, quite naturally; "and she is fonder of it; though I like it well enough, too.

"Then, why not come to-morrow?" suggested her companion.

"Well, call Geneviève here, and we can talk about it," said Laura, turning round to look for her sister who had been sitting not far behind her.

Just then, the sound of music came from the adjoining room, and 'St. Patrick's day in the morning,' was distinctly heard, well thumped upon the piano-fort as a duet.

"Oh! there are those two eternal Miss Ibbetsons—or the Misses Ibbetson, as their mamma always takes care to call them, when

she introduces them. I know their horrid Irish quadrilles by heart," said Lord Eardley, laughing.

"It is more than they do themselves," replied Laura; "they play wretchedly."

"I wonder they can bring themselves to exhibit," observed Lord Eardly "they never play in time."

"Why you see they have nothing to say, so they always march off to the piano-forte, that they may not pass for complete nonentities," said Laura.

"Oh! I assure you Lady Mannering you are mistaken," answered Lord Eardly; "The Miss Ibbetsons have plenty to say—but they can't talk out loud. They can whisper in a corner with gentlemen, and tell characters by hand writing, and have a variety of accomplishments of that sort; they don't want for ideas you may believe me,

and are very industrious in their way, but haven't succeeded yet"—and he laughed somewhat spitefully as he remembered the many young lady schemings of the Miss Ibbetsons from which he had always contrived to escape.

"I should have thought their ideas were all absorbed in their petticoats. I never saw such voluminous folds of crinoline," remarked Laura.

"Yes, and did you ever observe when they stoop, or sit down, their lank bodies go one way and the crinoline the other, and you see two distinct objects—one hears of people dancing '*à côté du temps*,' but the Miss Ibbetsons contrive to dance '*à côté des jupes*,' in a manner, for which they deserve especial credit."

And Lord Eardley, laughed with all his heart.

“They are ‘certainly *impayables*,” said Laura; “but how much longer are they going to keep up that horrid noise.”

“They have got into Scotch tunes now—I suppose we shall have Welch by and by. Poor papa’s nerves will be tortured—do look for Geneviève, I will make her sing, to stop the others.”

“Miss Malcolm will be much obliged to you,” said Lord Eardley, with a smile, as he got up to obey the commands of Lady Mannering.—In a few moments he returned, followed by Geneviève, who asked in a merry voice, for what reason she had been summoned.

“I was doing civilities for you, Laura, in the other room; no one would take notice of the Miss Ibbetsons’ playing, so I went and sat down by them.”

“It was exactly to protect me and my

company from them that I sent for you. Couldn't you manage dear Geneviève, to make them stop their eternal quadrilles, and sing something instead," said Lanra.

"Oh! it would be too ill-natured to stop them," answered Geneviève. "They must soon come to a natural end, for they only know three sets of tunes and they are at the second already. I know the endings of all of them—there, don't you remember the three chords?"

And she laughed with the prettiest expression of gaiety that was possible.

The spirits of Geneviève always seemed to revive those of every one around her; and the fine dark eyes of Laura sparkled with amusement, as she replied—

"Remember them! Shall I ever forget them. They have been regularly dinned into my ears every evening since I came

to the country. It was just the same at Florence, when we were there—just the same at Brighton. I should think, wherever they go, the Miss Ibbetsons, and their quadrilles, will be remembered to alleternity.”

“It is their only chance of being immortalized, I should think,” said Lord Eardley, compassionately.

“Geneviève,” said Laura, turning to her sister, with animation.—“what do you say to going out hunting to-morrow?”

“Oh! Laura, how I should like it!” was the ready reply.

“If Saladin is not too fresh,” interposed Lady Mannering.

“He is never too fresh—he cannot be too fresh, Laura. It is so pleasant when he is in spirits; he does not seem to touch the ground,” said Geneviève, with her eyes sparkling.

“With Miss Malcolm’s riding there can be no danger,” observed Lord Eardley, who viewed the hunting field in a very different light on the days when graced by Lady Mannering, to those when no ladies enlivened the scene.

“Well, if you really think so,” said Laura, doubtfully.

“Oh, I am sure of it, certain of it; do settle to go, Laura,” pleaded Geneviève, in her most earnest manner. She was passionately fond of hunting.

“Well I don’t say I will not,” said Laura, with a smile. “But where is the meet to-morrow.”

“At Elm Hill, the nicest country possible for you,” answered Lord Eardley.

“I know it,” said Laura; “but Geneviève has never been there.”

“It is not far—only nine miles,” said

Lord Eardley, "and a capital road all the way."

"But we had better not ride there," observed Laura. "Let us make a party and go in the barouche. I wonder if Aubrey would like to go—where is he?"

"Playing at whist in the other room. Shall I go and tell him," said Geneviève eagerly.

"Oh! no! he will say we made him lose the odd trick," said Laura, laughing. "We must bide our time, and talk only between the deals. We will go in and see what can be done."

And Lady Mannering as she spoke, rose from the sofa.

"Only settle to go—don't let our party be put off, dear Laura," whispered the anxious Geneviève.

And the dark eyes of Lord Eardley

seconded this prayer, as he watched the stately form of Laura gliding before him, as she moved towards the inner room, where the whist tables were placed.

CHAPTER X.

THE next morning was beautiful. It was a fine clear day, without wind, and a bright sun, beneath whose rays the slight frost of the night had already begun to disappear, as the gay hunting party came down the broad steps from the hall-door of Mannering Park.

Sir Aubrey, Mr. Delmaine, and others, had already started on horseback, and the barouche which stood at the door, with its four beautiful iron greys, was destined only to convey Lady Mannering and her sister,

with Lord Eardley and Mr. Malcolm as their escort. They were all in the highest spirits ; and, after a rapid drive, soon came in sight of Elm Hill, which was the covert to be drawn that day.

It was a very pretty sight. Many of the sportsmen had already arrived, and were exchanging their hacks for the hunters, which had been led by their grooms to the covert side ; and, in all directions, riders in gay red coats might be seen emerging from the various lanes and cross roads which intersected the common in front of Elm Hill, and hurrying towards the scene of action.

Their pace by no means slackened on perceiving the well-known equipage of Lady Mannering, coming down the hill towards the common—for Laura was already extremely popular in the country—and even the old weather-beaten fox-hunters, whose

life was passed in the saddle, were not so insensible to the grace and beauty of the young bride and her sister, as not to feel the pleasure of the day enhanced by their arrival.

They were very soon mounted. Geneviève, on her favourite Saladin, a spirited grey Arabian—and her sister, on a dark chestnut, of exceeding beauty, which had been a wedding-gift from her father. Both sisters looked well on horseback, but Geneviève was the best rider. She had far greater judgment in the management of her horse, which, with her undaunted courage, left few fears as to her safety in the minds of the beholders.

After a very short time, a cheering cry was heard—the fox was found—the hounds burst from the covert—and away went the whole field, over hill and dale, with such

lightning speed, that in a few minutes not a vestige remained of the brilliant crowd which had so lately gathered on the well-known patch of green turf which bordered the covert of Elm Hill.

This wonderful rapidity of motion did not last long; and in about twenty minutes the hounds came to a check. If the truth had been owned, there were few of the bold riders most forward in the chase who were sorry to have a momentary pause. Panting and breathless, more from excitement than fatigue, the fine horses chafed at this untoward delay; but hunting, like everything else, has its changes and chances; and for some time it really appeared as if, with that short run, the whole sport of the day was to conclude.

✧ The fox had taken refuge among some rocks, and vain were all the efforts of hounds

and huntsmen to dislodge him from the shelter he had found. Disappointment sat upon every countenance; and, after a considerable lapse of time, it was agreed to proceed to another covert at a little distance—which was pronounced, by the best-informed of the sportsmen, to be “a sure find.”

They were not deceived. In a little while their perseverance was rewarded—another fox was found—and away flew the terrified animal, with its enemies in hot pursuit, as if their lives depended on their speed. This time, however, no friendly rocks were in view. A fine open country was in front, and, to the experienced, a long and steady run was a matter of certainty.

The terrific pace at last began to tell both upon horses and riders, and one straggler after another was overtaken by the least forward, till at last it became evident that

only the very crack riders were likely to be in at the death.

Among those who pulled up with a wisdom much to be commended, were Laura and Geneviève. It is doubtful if the latter might not have been tempted to try still further the mettle of Saladin, had it not been for the strict commands of Mr. Malcolm, that "she should not leave her sister." Prudent man, he had perhaps two reasons for this. It was quite certain, however, that for any rational people they had had quite riding enough. They were still a great distance from home, and Geneviève was obliged to resign herself to her fate.

As soon as it was announced that Lady Mannering was about to leave the hunt, a sudden lameness was observed by Lord Eardley in his horse, and the necessity for returning home slowly was so vehemently

asserted by his lordship, that Laura was forced to break through the rule she always laid down, "that on her account no one should ever give up their sport."

This was an exceedingly good rule, and went far in securing to her the popularity she had from the first enjoyed among her fox-hunting friends. She was perfectly independent on horseback, and not being in any degree in the way, no one felt the uncomfortable necessity of having to take care of her.

The ride home was extremely pleasant. Before they had proceeded far, they were overtaken by several acquaintances, who fairly "thrown out," were returning to their homes, which were in the neighbourhood of Mannering Park. The sport of the morning did not appear to have taken the edge off the spirits of any of the party, and long

after the short-lived winter's day had come to a close, the silvery laugh of Geneviève might have been heard, as they cantered along the lanes leading to the great avenue which formed the entrance to Mannering Park.

It was quite dark when they reached the house, and in all the comfortable anticipation of a nice warm cup of tea, the fair Amazons retired to their respective dressing-rooms.

CHAPTER XI.

It was nearly eight o'clock, when Lady Mannering, with evident signs of perturbation upon her countenance, made her appearance in the drawing-room, where she found Lord Eardley, Dr. Radcliffe, and Mrs. Pringle already assembled—the chaplain looking but little pleased at having been kept waiting for his dinner.

“Only think,” exclaimed Laura, as she entered the room, “it is just eight, and no one come back yet!”

“The run was very long, I suppose,” said Lord Eardley.

“But we have been home these two hours—where can they have gone to?” replied Lady Mannering.

“They have got into some out-of-the-way place, depend upon it; and as they must come back by the road, they may have to go round, and with horses pretty well done up, they can’t get on very fast,” observed Lord Eardley.

“Papa hates galloping his hunters along the road,” said Geneviève, who had just come into the room, and overheard the words of the last speaker.

“Depend upon it,” observed Dr. Radcliffe gloomily; “they will take their time.”

“I begin to be frightened,” said Laura, looking anxiously from one to the other.

“Oh! there is no danger;” answered Geneviève, who was not of an apprehensive nature.

“And, besides, they could not all be killed together,” said Lord Eardley, looking as if he thought he had made a very clever remark. “There are five missing, for you know Captain Lawrenson and Sedley were to come home with Aubrey. I heard them settling it. Now you see five men couldn’t break their necks in the same ditch.”

“Not easily,” said Dr. Radcliffe; “except out of a railway train.”

At the sound of the word ‘railway,’ Mrs. Pringle, who was doing some white cotton crochet work near the lamp on the table, took off her spectacles, and, raising her head, exclaimed, “Do you know what I think? They will come back to Burnham by the train.”

“Nothing more likely,” said Dr. Radcliffe, brightening up at the idea that dinner might in that case be near coming; for Lady Man-

nering could never think of waiting for a train that only came in at nine o'clock.

"I don't think so at all," replied Laura.

"I assure you, Lady Mannering," said Mrs. Pringle, gently, "there is nothing more likely. I have known Aubrey do it several times. You must not alarm yourself."

The equanimity of Laura was not likely to be much restored by any advice from Mrs. Pringle, and the intimate knowledge she always displayed of the habits and tastes of her husband had begun to be excessively galling. She, therefore, did not answer, but looked discontentedly into the fire before her.

"If we could but know where the run ended," said the worthy chaplain, who felt that his prospect of dinner was not improving by the discussion. "Which way were

they going, Lord Eardley, when you left them?"

"Straight for Ashridge," was the reply.

"Well," continued the doctor, to whom every inch of the ground was familiar, "they would find the earths stopped there, and, unless they killed immediately, the fox would be sure to make for Coleshill or Batley's Wood. Both places would leave them close to the station at Vermont, and from that they would be here in an hour. Depend upon it, they will come by the nine o'clock train."

"I begin to think so too," ventured Lord Eardley, looking doubtingly at Laura. "It would be near thirty miles round by the road."

"Well, if you really think it likely," said Laura, beginning to relax in her opposition to the general idea.

“ I do, indeed,” answered Lord Eardley, positively.

“ Hadn’t you better send the carriage down to Burnham, to meet the train,” suggested Mrs. Pringle, whose active brain, immediately supplied a sure way of saving the expence of a fly from the neighbouring village.

“ Oh, yes! do send the carriage Laura,” said Geneviève, eagerly; “ Papa will be here so much the sooner. And perhaps they might not find a fly at the inn. Only think if they had to walk.”

“ Well, that would be a bad business, particularly if they are as tired as I am,” answered Laura, drawing her lace shawl closer over her shoulders and settling herself back in her arm chair—a movement which made the heart of Dr. Radcliffe sink. Then suddenly resuming the conversation, as if to

defer to the opinion of Geneviève, she said :

“ So you really do think they will come by the train.”

“ I do, indeed, Laura,” replied Geneviève, and looking round, she added : “ Everybody thinks so — they never would ride home thirty miles on their tired horses when they can come by the railroad in an hour. Shall I order the carriage?— do let me, Laura.”

“ Well, Geneviève, ring the bell then, and do as you like. Though, I am not at all sure, we are right,” answered Laura, with a sidelong glance at Mrs. Pringle, which she did not intend her to see. Mrs. Pringle, however, had put on her spectacles again, and was hard at work with her white cotton and crochet needle, making a frightful thing to disfigure the back of Sir Aubrey’s arm-chair.

She heard the carriage ordered, but she never looked up from her work. She did not want to seem to interfere, and yet she had carried her point, There would be no hired fly driving up to the door of Manner-
ing Park that night. She had succeeded, and was satisfied. She did not want to triumph. Mrs. Pringle was a sensible woman in her way.

“And now,” said Laura, whose fears apparently were calmed by the decision to which she had just come; “suppose we ask for dinner. It will be quite impossible to wait for these gentlemen; they can never be here and dressed before ten o’clock.”

“Certainly, certainly, Lady Mannering. It would be much too long for you to wait,” exclaimed Dr. Radcliffe, eagerly rising, and going towards her. “Let me ring the bell for you; it is an hour later than usual.

But, to be sure, Lannois has one peculiar talent—he never over-roasts the haunch.”

With this consolatory idea, the good doctor again relapsed into silence and his arm-chair. Visions of *entrées*, doubtless, were passing before his eyes ; but he was not left long to his dreams of bliss, for dinner was soon afterwards announced. It passed over pleasantly enough, considering the mystery that hung over the fate of five individuals who were to have partaken of the repast.

The fair mistress of the house perfectly recovered her spirits, although still persisting that she had no real belief in the arrival of the expected railroad party. She had a childish pleasure in indirectly contradicting any opinion promulgated by her *bête noire*, Mrs. Pringle ; but Mrs. Pringle took no notice of her remarks. She ate her mutton,

and drank her two glasses of sherry, with her accustomed regularity ; and dinner was over, and the ladies had retired to their coffee in the drawing-room, before the fate of the travellers was ascertained.

It then turned out, that the surmises of Mrs. Pringle and Dr. Radcliffe had been perfectly correct. The run had come to an end exactly as the doctor had traced it out, and the tired fox-hunters were too happy to avail themselves of the convenience of a train, for which they had only a few minutes to wait. Their arrival at Mannering Park put an end at once to all anxiety on their account, and Laura was forced to acknowledge to herself, that the superior sagacity of the despised ' Aunt Margaret ' had for once been exceedingly useful.

Dr. Radcliffe, who knew that to it alone he was indebted for getting an excellent

dinner before it was spoiled, resolved to show his gratitude to her in some more substantial manner than words, and therefore proposed to her a game of penny piquet, in order to pass away the time usefully, until Sir Aubrey and his companions should appear in the drawing-room.

The doctor particularly hated cards—and Mrs. Pringle, though she loudly denounced all gambling, could not resist the opportunity of realizing a few pence—a matter which her superior skill over her reverend antagonist, rendered certain.

It was very late when the other gentlemen came in from dinner. Geneviève had almost sung herself to sleep ; and even the *platitudes* of Lord Eardley began to fall somewhat heavily on the drowsy ear of Lady Mannering. The entrance of the long wished for party immediately infused

new life into the weary watchers. As a matter of course, the whole run was run over again, for the benefit of those who had been thrown out, and the subject was far too interesting to almost everybody present, to be hastily passed over.

The sport had been splendid : no serious accident had occurred to mar the pleasures of the day, and all were in the highest spirits. Sir Aubrey, relaxing from his usual coldness, said a few words of kindness to his wife ; and Mr. Malcolm, who was as ardent a lover of the chase as the youngest sportsman in the field, laughed with the gaiety of a child as he recounted the adventures of the day.

“ To wind up everything,” he said, addressing his daughter as he threw himself into an arm-chair by her side, “ who do you think, Laura, we encountered when we got

off our horses at Ashridge, to wait for the train?"

"How can I tell," answered Laura—"Mrs. Littlejohn, perhaps, or Mrs. Markham. They go every Saturday to town—at least, so I am told, for I know nothing about it."

"No—it was neither of them—it was no one from this part of the country—But you will never guess," continued Mr. Malcolm. "What do you say to the Mr. and Mrs. and the Misses Somerset Brown?"

"Not possible," exclaimed Laura, opening her eyes very wide.

"True—most positively true," returned Mr. Malcolm—"the moment I went upon the platform, I recognised them all—gowns, bonnets, and all—I could have sworn to them at any distance."

"But you don't know them, Papa!" said Laura.

“I did not; but, now there are no people, I know better—“we are the dearest friends in the world,” replied Mr. Malcolm, laughing.

“I can’t make it out,” said Laura, looking puzzled.

“Listen, and I will tell you all about it,” answered her father. “It all comes of the affection of ladies for their caps. Mrs. Brown, it seems, had been on a visit to the Livingstones, at Coleshill, for several days, but to-day she left them, in order to join a very gay party at Ripley Hall, which is given in honour of young Ripley’s coming of age. Mrs. Brown, however, had no sooner arrived at Ashridge station, and sent back the carriage which had brought her from Coleshill, than she found that her cap-box was left behind.”

“That was a loss, poor woman,” said

Laura, with a smile, as she recollected the flaxen wig of Mrs. Somersett Brown.

“Yes, and how to recover the loss was the question. Mrs. Brown was frantic—the French maid was in despair—there was no one at the station who could be spared to run back to Coleshill for the box.”

“What could they do?” asked Laura, looking really interested.

“Why, it was just settled, as we arrived, that poor old Brown himself should hobble back to Coleshill, and they should give up this train and wait for the next.”

“But the man is always dying of gout!” observed Laura.

“Of course he is—that is the best part of the joke—he never would have got over the first hill,” replied Mr. Malcolm; “and in half an hour the whole family would have had to walk after him.”

“And what did *you* do, Papa, in the middle of all this trouble?” inquired Laura.

“Why, what could I do, but act the *preux chevalier*, and get the sore distressed lady out of her scrape. I luckily had Jenkins there with my second horse, so I sent him off full gallop to Coleshill, and up came the missing box in a tax-cart, just as the train was going to start.”

“Now that is so like you, Papa—going out of your way to do what nobody else would ever think of doing—and for that horrid woman, too, that we have been avoiding all our lives.”

“Oh! there will be no use in that any longer;” said Mr. Malcolm, laughing. “I am fairly caught—booked, I have no doubt, high upon the list. I have been asked a dozen times to all her ‘Wednesdays’ already. I was nearly smothered with gratitude all

the journey—and old Brown, who was just out of a fit of the gout, and whose great toe, I conclude, will never forget me, insists upon my taking up my abode at his villa whenever I want to run up to town for a few days.”

“You will never get rid of them now,” observed Laura, gravely.

“Never, I fear—nor you either, Laura,” replied Mr. Malcolm; “she will call on you the moment you go to town.”

“Pray, Mr. Malcolm,” said Lord Eardley, who had been listening attentively to all the conversation, “is that Mrs. Somersett Brown the woman that goes by the name of ‘my Wednesday?’”

“Exactly so,” replied Mr. Malcolm.

“I thought as much,” observed the young man, with a wonderful look of intelligence.

CHAPTER XII.

MRS. SOMERSETT BROWN, or, as she always chose to spell her name, Mrs. Somerset Browne, in the hope of its being supposed that she belonged, at least, to one noble family, was the daughter of a retired grocer, in the north of England.

Being an only child, she naturally succeeded to the property of her father; and as—by the time the worthy tea-dealer was gathered to his ancestors—his accumulated savings amounted to a sum which, well invested, produced a net income of four hun-

dred a-year—so the fat and blooming Miss Huxton imagined herself an heiress of no small consequence.

A country life offered no charms for her. She had read in novels of the sayings and doings of a variety of great people with high-sounding names, and she longed ardently to be amongst them, and take her part in the festive scenes in which she imagined them to pass their lives. Who could tell but that ere long she might contrive legally to belong to them?

Being of a somewhat tender nature, matrimonial views had not always been excluded from the dreams of bliss in which she suffered herself to indulge ; but the fair Caroline Huxton was prudent, as well as ambitious, and firmly shut the door of her heart against all intruders, in the shape of country swains and rural suitors.

What to her were the charms of the young, rising apothecary, with the gay shop at the corner of the principal street of the village; or the pale, sentimental-looking curate, with his suite of three rooms, eight feet square, over the stationer's, and opposite the church?—she, who might have a Lord Edward, or a Lord Ernest, or even an impoverished Earl or Marquis, sighing at her feet. No! the more she reflected, the higher rose her aspirations; and, therefore, Miss Huxton resolved upon the utmost circumspection and decorum.

Her first care was to emancipate herself from the trammels of her country connexions, and take up her abode in London. This she contrived to effect through the means of some distant relations, whom she had never seen, but who obligingly accepted her offer of sharing their household

expenses, on condition of her occupying suitable apartments in their house.

Mr. and Mrs. Clifton, who were the parties to whom she applied, had no objection to receive a cousin who was independent, and would cost them nothing. They had a pleasant little dwelling, with a green verandah and a pretty garden, on the sunny side of Notting Hill, and there would be plenty of room. And so in the course of time everything was arranged, and Miss Huxton found herself comfortably domiciled in London.

She very soon, however, discovered what might have been still earlier apparent to any one so endowed with perspicacity, that her change of abode would produce very little change in her position. Month after month passed by, and the realization of her dreams was by no means nearer. Mr. and

Mrs. Clifton were quiet people who liked each other, and liked staying at home, and had not a single acquaintance out of their own line.

The spirit of the enterprising Miss Huxton began to quail. Admirers she had none, and it must be confessed that the thriving apothecary, and the starving curate were even sometimes remembered with regret; they, however, were safe in the wilds of Cumberland, undisturbed by the sighs of the fair Caroline.

She was becoming desperate. Morning, noon, and night she studied the *Morning Post*, and learned by heart all the names of the people who spend a fortune in having their movements advertised in so natural a manner as to deceive the unwary. The names grew familiar to her ear as household words, but alas! that was all she could attain.

Months had been added to months, and Miss Huxton could now count by years since the period of her advent at Notting Hill. Hope had long since sickened and died, when at last a chance—a very remote one dawned upon her view. To make the shadow a reality, was her instant decision.

It so happened, that Mr. Clifton, the most peaceable man on earth, got into a quarrel with a neighbour. The cause was, his having quite inadvertently seized upon some two feet of ground at the back of his house, which did not belong to him ; and, as he had built a low wall upon it, he did not seem inclined to relinquish the possession of the disputed territory.

After a long time spent in half amicable and half angry discussion, it was agreed to refer the matter to arbitration ; and one

fine day Mr. Somerset Brown arrived at the Notting Hill villa, and introduced himself to its perplexed owner.

He was a retired solicitor, who, being a friend of the injured party, had kindly come to lend him his legal assistance, in order to extricate him from the difficulty of not being able to prove that four feet of ground were not the same as two. The vigilant eyes of Miss Huxton immediately detected the arrival of the new visitor ; and, decking herself in her brightest ribbons and sweetest smiles, she hurried down to the drawing-room, in order to give the benefit of her advice to her dear cousin.

Mr. Somerset Brown was then quite a young man, with a florid complexion and black hair. The acquaintance once made, it soon ripened into intimacy ; and Mr. Somerset Brown was not long in perceiving

that he had made a very favourable impression on the gentle Caroline.

She, on her side, could scarcely restrain herself within the bounds of decorum, when she saw the vista of happiness—long deferred happiness—rising before her. It was not, however, the personal charms of Mr. Somersett Brown which caused the extreme favour with which she received his attentions; it was simply his apparent acquaintance with several persons of that class to which Miss Huxton looked up with a reverence bordering on idolatry. Here was a discovery! It was of small importance, in her eyes, that his knowledge of aristocratic society should be confined to two or three of the least respectable of its members—persons for whom he had transacted business in a very private way: he knew them, and that was quite enough for her. Time and her own talents would do the rest.

She married Mr. Somerset Brown.

The first point was gained—but it would require a much greater amount of patience than is the ordinary share of mortals, to follow, step by step, the rise and progress of this indefatigable aspirant to fashionable notoriety. It must be a wonderfully gifted historian who could faithfully record the amount of schemes, impudence, and meanness on her side, and the snubbings, slights, and ridicule on the part of the world, which chequered the life of Mrs. Somerset Brown.

And were the tale but half told, it would appear incredible. It suffices to know, that after toil which seemed endless, and disappointments innumerable, she so far succeeded in her plans as certainly to have emerged from obscurity. She had got her name into the newspapers, which, to her,

was a matter of paramount importance ; and over the incessant chroniclings of her arrivals and departures, she kept a most maternal watch.

Arrived at this pinnacle of happiness, she found herself in another dilemma. Some more substantial support than the breath of fame was requisite, in order to enable her to preserve her equilibrium upon the giddy height to which she had climbed. She had been too often thrown over and forgotten not to be perfectly aware that her whole acquaintance would desert *en masse*, unless, by some strenuous effort, she could continue, as she said, "to bring people together."

How this was to be accomplished, was the difficult question. With a very small house, and a very small income, it was impossible to dazzle the world, as the world only likes to be dazzled. The twelve hun-

dred people, whose names she boasted of having upon her visiting list, could not be crammed into her two-windowed house, on the wrong side of Park Street, nor feasted upon an income seldom averaging six hundred a year; for Mr. Somersett Brown had, of course, long before this, been interdicted from any public exercise of his profession, and could only do an odd job now and then, underhand, for a friend.

Added to this, her two daughters, whose very existence had been suppressed from the knowledge of the world as long as possible, at length had grown up, and insisted on coming out—an event which straitened still more the circumstances of the family.

The position began to be embarrassing. The fertile brain of Mrs. Somersett Brown could devise no farther way of expanding the little fortune she possessed. Had she

starved herself and her household for two years, she could not have afforded to give even one ball. And, then, where could the said ball be given, even if she had had the means?

All at once the idea of a change of residence rushed upon her mind. She would go into the country—living was cheaper there; and by not going too far away, she might still contrive to attract the society by whose very breath she seemed to exist.

The plan appeared feasible enough, but to carry it out with any effect, either money or popularity was wanting. Mrs. Somersett Brown had neither. Nothing daunted, however, by the want of means, the only difficulty she admitted, she, with her usual activity, set about discovering some mode of carrying out her project. A villa must be taken. A villa was now the subject of her dreams. It, however, turned out to be

a very much more expensive affair than she had anticipated. Every pretty house within reach of town was already appropriated, and the rent demanded for even the inferior ones was enormous.

Necessity, however, has no choice; and Mrs. Somersett Brown had decreed that to her a villa was a necessity. Her labours for a long time were in vain, but at length they terminated in her taking on lease one of the most frightful residences imaginable in the neighbourhood of Hampstead Heath. A miserable house at the end of a long damp lane, a strip of ground with lilac bushes at each side, and some ugly trees in the middle, which prevented the grass ever growing green; such was the villa and pleasure-grounds in which Mrs. Somersett Brown intended to surprise the world by a continued series of fêtes.

It was a rural retreat, unique of its kind, and added to its other charms that of being close to 'an Academy for young gentlemen,' which said individuals were constantly to be seen perched upon the top of the wall that separated them from the territory of Mrs. Somersett Brown—especially when the Miss Somersett Browns made their appearance in the garden.

No sooner had the indefatigable woman installed herself in her new abode, than she began to enlighten her friends as to the marvels it contained; and, as the long-wished-for paragraph in the *Morning Post*, about 'the receptions of Mrs. Somersett Brown at her beautiful villa on Hampstead Hill,' gleamed by anticipation before her eyes, she determined that all her acquaintance should exhibit the same credulity as the public were supposed to possess.

No eulogium was, therefore, too great for this terrestrial Paradise ; and by dint of falsehoods and puffings of monstrous magnitude, a species of curiosity pervaded the world, when Mrs. Somersett Brown's first cards of invitation were issued for a *déjeuner* on Hampstead Hill. It may be imagined the surprise, not to say dismay, of the gay assemblage who had encountered the heat and dust of a summer's day, in the hope of at least enjoying a beautiful country view, and admiring a very pretty place. Shut in between two high brick walls, which kept the little grass there was, comfortably damp from the rain of the night before, the visitors could see nothing at all. Mrs. Somersett Brown, having kindly concealed from them that the only good view of the adjacent country must be taken from the attic windows.

There was, therefore, no hope from without, and the company resigned themselves to endeavouring to extract what amusement they could from some atrocious *amateur* singing, assisted by inferior artists with cracked voices—for no good ones ever entered her house. Mrs. Somersett Brown was extremely well known in the musical world—a world not always harmonious when its interests are overlooked.

This, with some tea and very bad fruit, pulled about by her own and all the collected maids of the neighbourhood—for servants there were none—made up the sum total of the festivities which were to compensate to the invited guests, for a dusty drive of five miles.

It can hardly be supposed that any one who had seen so much of the world as Mrs. Somersett Brown could be ignorant of the

paucity of the entertainment she in every way offered to her friends. Certainly not. She knew perfectly well what she had done. But so frantic was her determination to push herself into notice, by any and every means in her power, that with the most unblushing effrontery she followed up her plan.

The panegyrics on her charming villa were resumed with double spirit, and the public were enlightened as to her future intentions by an inundation of cards for every Wednesday during the remainder of the season. It may be imagined that, after the first specimen, the visitors to the charming villa were few and far between; but that made no alteration in the *aplomb* with which its owner asserted the pre-eminence of herself and her "Wednesdays" over every other amusement of the fashionable world.

Her impudence was extraordinary. She not only lived with the words, "I hope you will come to my Wednesdays," eternally on her lips, but she had been heard to declare, "I hope you will *not* come to my Wednesdays," to more than one person who had fallen under her displeasure.

Both invitation and prohibition were pretty nearly alike superfluous ; but, as it is extremely disagreeable to be constantly asked to do anything one has no inclination to do, she became every day a more intolerable nuisance to the persecuted world, which revenged itself by bestowing upon her the nick-name of "My Wednesday," which promised to cleave to her to her dying day.

Such was Mrs. Somersett Brown, the lady to whose rescue Mr. Malcolm had so gallantly come, when, on the platform of

Ashridge station, he had found her bewailing the loss of her caps; and this faint outline of her history will account for the surprise with which Lady Mannering had heard of her father's having made her acquaintance, and accepted an invitation to Sycamore Lodge, which was the name of the charming villa of the Somerset Browns.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE happy month which had been devoted to the first visit of Geneviève to her sister, was fast drawing to a close, and Mr. Malcolm began to talk seriously of returning to Camerford House.

This was sad news for Geneviève, who enjoyed her present life with all the wild glee of a child. The attractions of Madame Tomasset, and her constant round of study, were not likely to compensate for the loss of the gay doings at Mannering Park, and the society of a sister whom she idolized.

It was not that Geneviève did not like her own home, but at her age, the solitude to which she had been suddenly condemned, oppressed her spirits; and this discomfort was not materially diminished by the constant *surveillance* of a very strict governess.

There was, however, one feeling which weighed down all others, and caused her many moments of inexpressible sorrow. From the hour of the marriage of her sister, Geneviève had been haunted by the idea that Laura would never again return to Camerford House. In vain she tried to combat the thought—it returned again, and again.

The arrangements of Sir Aubrey did not certainly hold out much hope. In spring, they were to go to London—in summer, to Germany; and, in winter, it was perfectly

impossible to persuade him to stir from home.

The great passion of his soul, was hunting—and, to indulge it, he spared neither trouble nor expense ; and, as he preferred that country, to which he was accustomed, there was very little chance of being able to persuade him to give up his precious time to the less inviting attractions of a family visit.

“ If there would but come a very long frost, then, perhaps, dear Papa, I might get to you,” said Laura to her father, as they walked together in the pleasure-ground, a few days before his departure from Mannerling Park.

“ We must hope for it—and it will come,” said Mr. Malcolm, cheerfully ; “ we cannot always have such open weather as we have had this winter.”

“If Aubrey would but let me go by myself—I should not mind it in the least. I cannot think why I may not,” said Laura.

“You cannot expect it, dear Laura. To say nothing of losing you, Sir Aubrey would not like to have his house upset, and his party broken up, by your being away. It would not be prudent to propose it, and I strongly advise you not to ask such a thing—certainly not at present.”

“But I have asked it, Papa—asked it a dozen times; and what do you think is his excuse for refusing me?” said Laura.

“Oh, he does not choose to spend his time paying visits, I suppose; it is very natural—few men do,” said Mr. Malcolm.

“Not at all, Papa—he does not like to spend his money paying for post-horses. He says it is too far for ours, and he will not throw away money upon innkeepers.

Did you ever know any thing so stingy?" said Laura.

"He does not mean it so," replied Mr. Malcolm, "it is only an excuse, in order not to leave the hunting. After all, you know, Laura, neither our country nor our hounds are to be compared with his."

"I don't believe it is anything about the hunting," said Laura, decidedly. "I believe it is only a bit of paltry economy, put into his head by Mrs. Pringle, probably. I have a great mind to insist upon going, and paying for the horses myself, out of my own money. But, Papa, what money have I really got? Do tell me. You managed everything about the settlements—I have not an idea what was in them. Am I to have no money at all, like a child that cannot be trusted? I think I shall apply to

Mrs. Pringle, and ask her to lend me all the pennies she wins at picquet."

"Laura," said her father, who did not feel quite comfortable at the bitterness betrayed by her tone, "take my advice, and leave Mrs. Pringle alone."

"Well, but about the money, Papa," answered Laura, pettishly; "you have not told me about the money. Am I not to have any all my life? Every lady I know has pin-money."

"Why, of course, you will have money, Laura," replied Mr. Malcolm. "There was four hundred a year settled for your pin-money."

"Four hundred!" exclaimed Laura, stopping short in her walk, and looking her father full in the face, "why, that will never do, Papa—it is nothing—Mrs. Blachford told me the other day that she had twelve,

and yet she could not manage to keep out of debt."

"She must manage very badly, then, my dear child," said Mr. Malcolm, with something very like a sigh.

"Four hundred a year," repeated Laura, in a tone of dismay; "why that will buy scarcely anything." And her mind ran rapidly over a whole list of things which she had settled were perfectly necessary, and must be immediately purchased on her arrival in town.

"You forget, Laura," replied Mr. Malcolm, "that you can have nothing very expensive to buy—You have a profusion of jewels, and your trousseau contained splendid lace, and every thing that was newest and prettiest."

"Yes, thanks to you, Papa," said Laura, turning to him with one of her sweetest smiles; "but all my gowns and bonnets are old-fashioned now. It is a long time since

they were bought You don't know what a difference a few months makes in things, Papa ; most of mine will be quite unwearable in spring."

"Yes, if you choose to follow every foolish change in the fashion ;—but, Laura, is that worth while ? —With your style of beauty you may wear anything — One fashion will suit you as well as another," said Mr. Malcolm, who never thought of any other motive for inducing his daughter to moderate her ideas of expense.

"But I don't see," persisted Laura, "why all this wonderful economy is necessary ; Aubrey has an immense fortune, and I am sure we don't spend a quarter of it. And, yet, he goes on just as if we were starving. It was only the other day that he was as angry as possible, because I insisted on the windows of our school-house

being made a rational size. They are so small that the poor children can literally hardly see to read; but he made as much fuss about it as if I had asked him to build a palace, and said he could not afford the expense of so many alterations. I do detest all these petty savings."

"My dear Laura," replied her father, somewhat alarmed at her tone, "you must know, as well as I do, that every one has some peculiarity, some small defect, that is eternally showing itself, and obscuring his better qualities. This love of economy is Aubrey's. He has a perfect *specialité* for saving in small things. But it does not, in reality, interfere with your happiness—you have everything you want. Nothing can be handsomer than your house and establishment; you have diamonds that a queen might envy. What more can you wish for?

Take my advice, don't look upon Aubrey's ways as a serious matter—just take the whole thing as a joke."

"It is no joke, at all, Papa," said Laura, discontentedly; "I assure you it makes my life very uncomfortable,"— she was going to say "miserable," but, on looking at her father's face, she thought it would be too strong a word. There was very little sympathy, although some anxiety might be discoverable on the fine countenance of Mr. Malcolm.

"But, indeed, they are mere trifles, all these misfortunes you take so to heart, my dear child. Why make such a fuss about little things."

"Because one's life is made up of little things. A woman's, perhaps, more than a man's;" observed Laura, with more justice than she usually bestowed upon an argument.

“Why, that is true enough; but,” answered Mr. Malcolm, beginning a little to shift his ground; “would it not be more kind, more generous, not to be constantly taking notice of trifles. It seems as if one was always on the watch for people’s faults. I think you would manage better if you did not appear to observe them.”

“I am sure, I should not take the trouble, if they did not continually annoy me,” answered Laura, haughtily; “but I really must have some money. It is too bad not to have even half-a-crown to give to a beggar.”

“Oh! as to that,” replied Mr. Malcolm, carelessly, “it must be a mere oversight on the part of Aubrey, that you have not received your allowance. You have only to ask him for it.”

“Indeed, I shall do no such thing, Papa,”

replied Laura, sharply. "Can't you ask him for me—or rather, don't ask it as a favour—just tell him I want it."

"My meddling about money affairs would be highly injudicious," said Mr. Malcolm, very decidedly.

"But, can't the lawyer's pay it to me? It would be no object to them to stint me in every thing."

"My dear Laura, how you talk! You will spoil everything, if you are so impetuous. Why, you are as bad as when you were a child."

"I have never had any one to deal with before, except you, Papa," said Laura, affectionately, and, as she looked up in his face, her beautiful dark eyes filled with tears. Mr. Malcolm hastily pressed her arm to his side, but he said nothing, for he had just stopped to admire a whole grove

of magnolias which ornamented a little grassy knoll in the pleasure-ground, and were conspicuous in the wintry scene by the brilliancy of their foliage.

“Well, papa,” continued Laura, after a moment’s pause, “if you won’t speak about the money, you might at least help me to get rid of that odious Mrs. Pringle.”

“There again, Laura,” said Mr. Malcolm, laughing.

“Now don’t laugh, papa—if you knew what a torment she is—you must think so yourself—I know you do.”

“Indeed, Laura, I never think about her. What does it signify, whether that old woman is knitting her crochet-work in a corner or not. I am sure she is never in your way.”

“Oh! yes she is though,” replied Laura, “she is eternally counteracting me indi-

rectly in small things. I can trace her influence everywhere."

"But she is not a disagreeable woman," observed Mr. Malcolm, in a palliating manner; "I should say she was rather a kind-hearted person. And after all, Laura, you don't appear to see much of her, though she is in the same house."

"Well, no, I can't say I do, except at dinner time; but it is her eternal watching that I can't endure. When she puts down her head and looks at me over her spectacles, I feel as if the eyes of a basilisk were on me. I don't so much mind it here, the house is so large; but when we go to London it will be dreadful; it will drive me distracted, I know."

"Are you quite sure she means to go?" asked Mr. Malcolm, musingly.

"No, I know nothing at all about it," re-

plied his giddy daughter ; “ I have never troubled myself to inquire. I am sure I shall not invite her, whatever Aubrey may do.”

“ I think I may be of more use to you in this, Laura, than about the money—I will think about it ; we have plenty of time before us until we settle in town.”

“ Plenty, indeed,” said Laura, with a sigh. “ I wish Easter was come.”

“ Don’t be so stupid, child,” said Mr. Malcolm, laughing ; “ but amuse yourself where you are.”

“ Ah ! it’s very well for you to talk, papa ; but what am I to do when you and Geneviève are gone ?”

“ Teach the school-children to knit stockings and read the Bible,” answered Mr. Malcolm, in the same manner.

“ Oh, thank you ! but Miss Wilson does

that. But, at all events, dear, good papa," said Laura, playfully, "you won't forget to try and liberate me from that old Pringle, in London. Now, only fancy her and her coal-scuttle black bonnet in my barouche in the Park."

"She is certainly not ornamental," said Mr. Malcolm, laughing; "but do try and behave decently to her here, Laura, and I will see what I can do for you."

"Oh! thank you, thank you, dear papa," cried Laura, joyfully; "but how will you set about it. There will not be the least use in speaking to Aubrey."

"I thought of enlisting Dr. Radcliffe on our side," replied Mr. Malcolm. "He is all-powerful with the old lady."

"An excellent plan, dear papa," answered Laura, after a moment's pause.

“But mind, you don’t speak to him till after dinner. And now let us go in, for it is just beginning to rain.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Never since the far-famed Sycamore Lodge had become the cherished abode of the no less celebrated Mrs. Somersett Brown, had such a complete revolution taken place within its walls, as upon the fortnight before the day which Mr. Malcolm had fixed for his visit. He expected to be obliged to run up to town, and for reasons of his own, had very unexpectedly to her, accepted the pressing invitation which she had given him on the eventful morning, when they had met upon the railroad.

These reasons were not very flattering to

the mistress of the house, as they were solely of an electioneering nature, but of this fact Mrs. Somerset Brown was completely ignorant, as she had never been informed of the ambition of her expected visitor to attain a place in the senate of his country. Mr. Malcolm, however, fully alive to his own interests, was perfectly aware that the very small landed property of Mr. Somerset Brown, consisting of half a dozen houses, was situated within the boundaries of the county he so much longed to represent, and gave to its owner the advantage of several votes.

He was also perfectly aware that although Mr. Somerset Brown was an ultra liberal, Mrs. Somerset Brown loudly professed the highest Tory principles. The young ladies, he concluded, followed the example of their mother, and therefore it was to the female

part of the family that he trusted for the ultimate propitiation of the higher power.

All this was a secret from Mrs. Somerset Brown, who of course ascribed entirely to her own attractions and consequence, the *empressement* with which Mr. Malcolm had extricated her from her embarrassing position at the Vermont station, and accepted the hospitable offers with which she had immediately overwhelmed him.

The hospitality, however, was likely to cost her dear. A stranger who had listened to her careless, and apparently warm-hearted invitation, might have possibly believed that she was speaking the truth, when she declared with the utmost semblance of veracity, "That it was not putting her out of her way in the least, their house was not large, but they had always a spare room for a friend, a—charming room overlooking the garden."

But there was not one word of truth in the whole matter. She had no spare room at all. The house consisted of two small rooms on the ground floor, opening into each other, and which were used as a dining-room; two of the same dimensions above, served the purposes of drawing-room; and on one side, up three or four steps, was a single room, of very miniature dimensions, which was the dormitory of Mr. and Mrs. Somersett Brown. The two girls slept in an attic next to the maids; and the servant boy, who also drove the fly, was crammed into some nook fitted up over the stable—Mrs. Somersett Brown, now and then, hired a fly for a month, although she talked loudly all the year round of “her carriages and horses.”

It may be imagined the consternation with which Mr. Somersett Brown had overheard

the acceptance of the civilities of his wife by Mr. Malcolm, as she talked, without intermission, during the whole hour he remained in the train. The rattling of the carriage prevented the luckless owner of the house from hearing every word, but he knew—he felt enough to convince him, that Mr. Malcolm had acquiesced in the proposal, that he was coming to Sycamore Lodge, and he also knew that there was no room for him.

This was a pleasant prospect. Any one else might have been tempted to have told the truth, but to this effort Mr. Somerset Brown was unequal. He stood too much in awe of his wife, and was actually obliged, when the train stopped at the Burnham station, to shake his new acquaintance by the hand, and re-echo the invitation given by his wife, although with the consciousness of its hollowness weighing down his heart.

His teeth chattered as he said the words, but it was done, and he trusted to the well-known ingenuity of his better half to extricate him from his dilemma.

To his great surprise, however, he found her implacably obdurate upon this point. She firmly declared she would do nothing towards annulling the invitation she had given. All her usual devices—for it was a common trick with her to ask a number of people to dinner, and then put them off—were by turns suggested to her, but she scorned them all.

To Sycamore Lodge, therefore, Mr. Malcolm must come. And so, the moment they arrived at home, the note of preparation was sounded, and the whole house turned upside down. Everybody seemed to push out the person before him or her ; Mr. and Mrs. Somersett Brown took possession of the

attic hitherto occupied by their daughters. The young ladies went into the maids' room; the maids were transferred to the nook over the stable, and the unfortunate servant boy was turned into the lane to find a lodging where he best might.

But with the change of apartments, the troubles of the household were by no means ended. The room thus forcibly cleared for the arrival of the illustrious guest was not fit to be seen. No one ever had seen it. Of that, Mrs. Somersett Brown took excellent care, for on her "Wednesdays" all the useless doors were carefully locked, and the keys deposited in her own writing-desk.

The fact was, that the upper part of the house was a perfect pig-stye. This fact, although it might be concealed from the "Wednesday" visitors, could not possibly escape the notice of one condemned to test

its existence by his own experience. The penurious habits of Mrs. Somersett Brown must undergo a most terrible shock. Paint, paper, carpets, and the whole furniture of the bed-room, were evils which no ingenuity on her part could now possibly avert. Strangers to this dirty and ill-regulated abode, they must be forthwith invited to meet the stranger guest.

All this would cost money, and money, next to that which she called "society," was the idol of the capacious heart of Mrs. Somersett Brown. The expense was inevitable. It must either be incurred, or the visitor must be put off; and the idea of this dreadful alternative was never for a moment entertained by the female part of the family.

With considerable alacrity each individual tendered her aid towards reducing things

to some degree of order and propriety. This was no easy matter. The dust of ages seemed to have accumulated in every corner, and the allowance of room was so scanty, that it appeared perfectly impossible to hide from view the heterogeneous mass produced by the collected treasures of the family.

There was one cupboard under the stairs, two or three more at the top and bottom of the house; and these, with an empty cellar, and an unoccupied stall in the stable, was all the room the premises afforded. There was no help for it. Everything must be crammed into every hole and corner that could be made available, and to the great detriment of bonnets and gowns, and all the perishable part of female paraphernalia, this was at last effected; and, for the first time, the symptoms of outlay and repair made their appearance at Sycamore Lodge.

CHAPTER XV.

It must not be, however, supposed that Mrs. Somersett Brown was left quite alone to support the whole weight of the metamorphosis which was taking place in her dwelling. It would be doing grievous injustice to the two young ladies, who generally so willingly, if not ably, seconded the efforts of their mother.

The two sisters, however, were very different. Sophia, the eldest, and the favourite of her mother, was the most innate *intriguante* that had ever existed. In one re-

spect only she differed from her mamma. While Mrs. Somersett Brown pursued the whole world, from the highest to the lowest of her acquaintance, with a view of maintaining or advancing her position—Sophia, no less eager in pursuit, had a totally different object.

A great marriage had ever been her thought by day, and dream by night; and, to effect this, no means, however indelicate and improper, were left untried. She had succeeded so far in persuading her mother that it was for the advancement of their mutual views that she should be permitted to carry on her schemes alone, whenever a necessity presented itself which gave hopes of success, that she had acquired a degree of liberty of which even the worldly-minded Mrs. Somersett Brown could not approve. But so craving was her own desire

for connection and acquaintance, that she hesitated to throw any obstacle in the way of attaining her heart's ambition through the means of her daughter.

Miss Somersett Brown, therefore, adopted a line quite unheard of in the annals of well-conducted girls. She not only, in every manner she could devise, went out without her mother, but actually contrived—small as was the house—to have a sitting-room to herself, in which she received as many visitors as she chose.

This she accomplished by closing the doors of one of the lower rooms which formed the dining-room, and passing the whole day alone. On pain of her eternal displeasure, no one ever ventured to enter that room until the dinner-hour liberated it from its occupant.

Here, the fair Sophia regularly spent

her mornings, either endeavouring to foster into maturity some one of the many incipient flirtations she had established, or in keeping up a sentimental correspondence with all the most promising of her absent admirers.

Writing letters to gentlemen who were no relations to her, had somewhat startled the ideas of propriety which Mrs. Somerset Brown professed ; but she was, as usual, over-ruled by the persuasions of her daughter, that “it was all for the advantage of the family that she should succeed.”

She was somewhat puzzled to understand how this could be effected, by the discovery, that many of the attendants and correspondents of Sophia were married men ; but to this fact she wisely shut her eyes ; for she had suffered the evil to grow to such a height, that it had become almost an impossibility to check it.

It may be imagined that this mode of life did not tend much to establish a reputation for propriety and decorum for the young lady. At first, people were indulgent; but when season after season passed over, and that each succeeding one was enlivened by some tale still more scandalous than its predecessor, of the conduct of Sophia Brown, the censorious world no longer measured its remarks.

Such flagrant breaches of all conventional rules could not be overlooked. The example to others of the same age was most pernicious—in self-defence, it could not with impunity be allowed to pass over in silence; and the consequence was, that in a few years the character of Miss Somerset Brown was irretrievably gone.

It would be endless to enumerate the variety of schemes which were set on foot,

and carried on by this industrious young lady. It suffices to say, that hitherto they had all totally failed. Perhaps this might, in some degree, be accounted for by the few personal attractions she possessed — She could scarcely be called good-looking—Her figure was short, her face broad, and her waist squeezed to the dimensions of a wasp. She had light hair, and light grey eyes, with a very cunning expression. It was amusing enough to watch those eyes when she was not aware of the scrutiny; they twinkled and twisted in every direction; and while speaking to one person they could follow the movements of every man in the room, whether he was an acquaintance or not.

She was eternally on the watch; but for what purpose, did not always exactly appear. Heart-breaking—to any one who

had a heart—would have been the adventures and mischances which constantly befel her; for many times she had, apparently, been on the point of succeeding in her designs, but one by one, all retreated as they had come, and the history of another “*mariage manqué*” went forth to gladden the scandal-mongers, and pacify decorous old maids.

To any one of less astounding energies than Mrs. Somersett Brown, these repeated failures would have brought sorrow, if not despair; but Mrs. Somersett Brown neither ‘sat down and wept,’ nor chided her daughter for the impropriety of her ways. She had gone too far—and so implicated herself in all the schemes of Sophia, that she could not risk the destruction of her own innumerable plots and plans, by an open rupture with her daughter.

Shutting her eyes, therefore, to her scandalous behaviour, and her ears to the comments that were made upon it, she went hand in hand with her daughter—aiding and abetting in every device that held out the most remote probability of success.

No allies could be firmer, and the fair Sophia would not always have found it easy to persevere unchecked in her course, without so vigilant a guardian of her interests; for her father was by no means so utterly devoid of common sense, as not to perceive that the course of life adopted by his eldest daughter was utterly at variance with that which he remembered as customary in the days of his youth.

It required no small ingenuity, first to persuade him of the efficacy of the plans laid down, and next to keep from his ears the very well-merited censure with which

the conduct of his daughter was visited by the world. As, of course, a father's feelings elicited some respect, even from the most scandal-loving, it ended in Mr. Somersett Brown being very tolerably ignorant of most that was going on ; and his habits of submission were now so well-established, that they had become a second nature to him. He had, besides, grown indolent and fat ; and—provided he had his book and his newspaper, and was entertained at dinner with all the news of the day—he did not care much what was passing around him, and staid quietly in the little back drawing-room, where he was carefully shut in.

If, however, Mrs. Somersett Brown had succeeded in thus forming an alliance, offensive and defensive, with her eldest daughter, she was not quite so fortunate with Meliora—for so the second was called.

Although possessing many of the qualities which adorned her mother and sister, Miss Meliora Brown was gifted with others which formed a strange contradiction in her character. There was an uncertainty in her temper which constantly militated even against her own designs. She had full as great a longing as that by which Sophia was possessed, to make what is called 'a great match;' and, had the means been at her command, she would probably have unhesitatingly adopted the same course; but Sophia, having taken possession of the ground, rendered this impossible.

There was not room in the house for two such parts to be enacted. Meliora therefore started in a different line; she was pensive and retiring, pretended an utter aversion to the gaieties of the world, although she always allowed herself to be

dragged into them ; and read books, and gave her opinion on their authors, in the hope of being supposed to be devoted to literature.

This was merely in opposition to her sister, who thought it was pretty to affect idleness, incapacity for study, and a perfect horror of anything approaching to a learned lady.

These peculiarities in the nature of the gentle Meliora, although of little consequence in themselves, were, sometimes, rather formidable impediments to the machinations of her mother and sister, and to add to the entanglements of both, and the comforts of Sycamore Lodge, a current of underhand opposition was an evil with which they were constantly threatened.

Meliora might not have been so ill-natured a person, had she from the first enjoyed all the advantages and amusements of life equally with her sister ; but as the hopes

of Mrs. Somersett Brown were specially founded upon the superior tact and cleverness which she ascribed to her eldest daughter, she very incautiously betrayed a preference for her which laid the foundation of an inveterate jealousy in the heart of the younger.

Feeling herself always in the way, Meliora became sulky, and resolved that if they would not have her, they should not be able to do without her. She therefore made it a point to be as unaccommodating as possible. If her mother or sister wanted her to go out with them, she was sure to find some positive necessity for staying at home, and if she could by any means discover that it was an object to them that she should remain in the house, she would clamorously assert her right of being included in their plans of amusement.

There was, however, one good result from this state of petty warfare. Amid all the adventures and tales of scandal which everywhere followed the name of Sophia Brown, the character of Meliora remained unscathed.

In order the more to annoy her sister, she affected the most rigid prudery. The plainness of her appearance, not to say ugliness, was such, that it appeared little likely she should be tempted to deviate from the strict rules of propriety she so loudly advocated. She was short and thick, with coarse features, dull, light hair, a swarthy complexion, and her mouth drawn down at the corners, exactly like her mother's.

In comparison with her sister, Sophia might certainly pass for a beauty. And yet with so few recommendations, Meliora spent her life in the full persuasion that one day or another she should succeed in

making a very brilliant match. Poor girl, it was well that she could find some comfort in her own ideas.

This chimera of her brain, however, produced an effect, that was ultimately beneficial to the soaring views of Mrs. Somerset Brown and her daughter Sophia. Fearful of counteracting her own hopes, Meliora studied her part, and never threw any opposition in the way when she saw it might be detrimental to her own views. She generally, therefore, confined the exercise of her powers of tormenting, to small things, and as abundant opportunities offered, her presence was not likely to be forgotten.

Such were the two young ladies who graced the sylvan shades of Sycamore Lodge. The example of Mrs. Somerset Brown had certainly not been thrown away upon her daughters.

CHAPTER XVI.

“WELL, I do hope that every thing is nearly ready now,” said Mrs Somersett Brown, as she came into the drawing-room at Sycamore Lodge, just before dinner was announced. It wanted two days to the anxiously looked for Monday when Mr. Malcolm was expected.

“The workmen are gone,” replied Sophia, “but the smell of the paint is intolerable—I don’t know how we shall ever get it out.”

“Oh, it will go of itself. I dare say to-

morrow we shall not perceive it," answered Mrs. Somerset Brown. "It is the new kind of paint. Barton assures me it is perfectly inodorous "

"It does not seem much like it," observed Meliora ; "it kept me awake all night, the smell was so horrid.'

"It can't be helped," said her mother, drily.

"Yes, but it won't do us much good to make a person sick by putting him in a new painted room," persisted Meliora ; "he will hate the name of the place for ever."

"Then, what is to be done, pray?" said Mrs. Somerset Brown—"It was absolutely necessary to paint the room, and Barton did it remarkably cheap for me."

"Yes, and he has used bad paint, I will answer for it," said Meliora. "It will never

dry. You will find it just as bad a month hence—I am certain of it.”

“Then, what is to be done? I ask again,” exclaimed Mrs. Somersett Brown, angrily, and looking from one to the other of her daughters.

“I know what I should do,” replied Meliora, with a decided air.

“And pray, what would you do?” asked Sophia, contemptuously.

“Put off Mr. Malcolm,” replied Meliora, quietly, but perfectly aware it was just the suggestion the most disagreeable possible to her hearers.

“Put off Mr. Malcolm!” repeated Mrs. Somersett Brown, with a look of amazement that was ludicrous.

“Put off Mr. Malcolm,” echoed Sophia, with a smile of disdain; “that would be clever indeed.”

“Why, he could come just as well any other time, and the smell of the paint would be gone,” said Meliora, with a very innocent air.

“It would be madness,” observed her mother, with a meaning look at Sophia.

“He would never come at all,” was the hurried rejoinder of the latter.

“I wonder he does come, I am sure,” persisted Meliora. “I can’t think what should bring him to the country this time of year, and in such weather too. The garden was under water last night, and the drain is overflowed again. It will never get dry now by Monday.”

Oh! that is nothing, no one goes into a garden in winter, and besides, we can make some excuse for staying in the house,” answered Mrs. Somersett Brown.

“The house is just as bad, mamma,” continued Meliora.

“Our new room up stairs is so damp, that it has taken every bit of stiffness out of my *tarlatane* gown. It is not fit to wear.”

“It must be worn as it is,” said her mother, shortly; “I shall buy no new things. I am nearly ruined with Mr. Barton’s bill.

“I can’t think how the maids contrived to catch such colds, all in a minute; I thought that room over the stable was so warm.”

“I suppose now we shall have the cook laid up, and no dinner when Mr. Malcolm is here,” said the consoling Meliora.

“Oh, no danger of that,” said Mrs. Somersett Brown, cheerfully. “I am much more afraid of his finding out that his room has been all new furnished; it would look so bad, just as if we had nothing decent in the house.” And Mrs. Brown glanced com-

placently at the red damask sofas in the drawing-room, the result of many months of starvation and contrivance.

“I don’t see how he is to find that out, except by the smell of the paint; for all the furniture is second-hand,” replied Meliora.

“But mamma,” exclaimed Sophia, without condescending to notice the observation of her sister—“What are we to do about people? who can we have to meet him?”

“I’m sure I don’t know,” said Mrs. Somersett Brown, frankly; “but I dare say we shall find some one.”

“Considering we have already tried fifty four people, and had nothing but excuses, I don’t see much chance of it,” said Meliora; “I am quite tired of writing notes.”

“Oh! we must make out some reason for being alone,” replied her mother.

“Why not put on black gowns, and call

it family mourning; he will never inquire, and that is an excuse for anything," suggested Sophia, who imagined she looked well in black.

"Indeed I shall do no such thing," replied her sister; "my violet wreath is turned quite red from the damp of that cupboard under the stairs, and I have nothing else to put on my head for mourning."

"Oh! anything will do. A white rose—you know you have one in your bonnet. You only want to make difficulties, Meliora; anything will do," suggested the amiable Sophia.

"Oh! anything will do for me, I have no doubt," replied Meliora, sharply; "but I shall certainly not put on black—you can go into as deep mourning as you please."

"I am sure I might for your good manners, Meliora," said Sophia, drawing herself

up with an attempt at dignity. "You get more cross and ill-natured every day."

"I don't act a part, and pretend to be amiable and pleasing, and overflowing with kindness, and fine feelings, and all that sort of deceit;" said Meliora, with a sneer; but Sophia merely made a movement with her shoulders, which she intended to be very expressive, and, turning to her mother, continued—

"But, after all, Mamma, what are we to do for people—we have only two days now."

"Can't you suggest somebody? All those I wanted the most, have refused," was the satisfactory reply.

"Three people would do. The table could not hold more," suggested Sophia, whose ambition was a dinner party.

"That is, if they came to dinner," replied her mother; "but I have not the

least intention of having them. You never think of the expense, Sophia. I should have to get another servant to wait, and all that eating and drinking would ruin me. No one can come to dinner here.

“Then they will never come at all,” bluntly observed Meliora.

“Oh, yes, they will, plenty of them,” replied Mrs. Somerset Brown. “There is Mrs. Craggs, who would go anywhere to save her own fire and candles. She would come.”

“A horrid squinting old woman—all bad rouge and dirty feathers,” cried Meliora.

“Then there is her toady, who she will be sure to want to bring, for she can get no one else—the Marquise de Bourrique, as she calls herself. The woman that wrote that trumpery book about Poland, last year,” said her mother.

“Still worse,” observed Sophia, with a laugh. “A tailor’s daughter—an upstart animal—educated for the stage, and without talents to act even a waiting-maid’s part. As to her book, it was the most vulgar thing I ever read—the only bits that were readable, were all copied out of others. Do you remember how Thornton and Sydney cut it up here one night, and showed us the very passages, in the Guide Books and Carrusa’s Travels? And, besides,” added Sophia, as if the idea were an after-thought, “she is so very improper. You know it was by the greatest possible luck she at last got married to that editor of a newspaper. She has had no end of adventures. Nothing can be worse or lower.”

“Oh! low enough, I allow,” said Mrs. Somersett Brown, with a toss of her head—
“and improper enough, too. I merely

thought of her to fill up, just at this time of year. I shouldn't think of producing her at 'my Wednesdays'—I flatter myself they are too select for that."

"Why not ask Lady Armitage?" suggested Meliora.

"Certainly not," replied Sophia, decidedly; "we don't want women with daughters. Fanny Armitage is the greatest flirt I know."

"And the prettiest girl in London," said Meliora, with a spiteful look at Sophia.

"I know who would just do, if she is still in town," exclaimed Mrs. Somerset Brown. "Miss Boyd, the girl that sings—"

"Yes—but we should have to send the carriage for her, and Thomas can't be spared," replied Sophia, who had no very particular desire that the fine voice of Miss Boyd should be heard by their expected visitor.

“Well, then, the Miss Carwells—they sing nearly as well. We shall want a little music. Meliora, you had better write to them at once,” said Mrs. Somersett Brown, decidedly.

“They are ugly enough, at all events,” said Meliora, coolly, as she rose to obey the commands of her mother.

“Pray,” said Mr. Somersett Brown, as he opened the drawing-room door, “are we to have any dinner to-day? I have been sitting in that confounded attic until I am half frozen. I shall have a fit of the gout to-morrow.”

His entrance put a stop to the conversation, and in a few minutes, dinner being announced, the thoughts of Mrs. Somersett Brown were temporarily withdrawn from her troubles.

CHAPTER XVII.

MONDAY came, Mr. Malcolm arrived, and all the three ladies of Sycamore Lodge assumed their respective parts. Mrs. Somerset Brown concealed her endless contrivances and agony lest a farthing should be wasted, under an easy, careless manner, that spoke affluence and freedom from anxiety. Sophia put on the little joyous, simple ways of a child, who could not have understood the word "design;" and Meliora was the tender and devoted slave of the family—only living for the happiness of her mother and sister.

This being “their first appearance upon the stage” before their visitor, the perfection of their acting so far succeeded as to produce a doubt in the mind of Mr. Malcolm that they could be the same people of whom he had heard so many wonderful stories. It was only a doubt; for, consummate actor as he was himself, he knew how much might be done in that way.

At all events, whatever might be the cause, the effect was to render his visit much less irksome than he had expected; and although the house smelt horribly of paint—that his bed was much too short for him—and that Thomas, the factotum, who drove the fly and waited at table, spoilt his coat by throwing pea-soup over him at dinner—he contrived to get through the first day of his visit extremely well.

Mrs. Somerset Brown had managed to

prevent his seeing the mud-pools in the garden, by carrying him off “in her carriage,” to look at a beautiful country-house in the neighbourhood, which she said she was thinking of taking, although she had not the slightest idea of it ; and Sophia contrived to inveigle him into her morning room, where, crouched upon a low footstool by his side, she had rehearsed the first chapter of her innocent prattlings with her utmost fascination.

Sophia, however, was not so completely *au fait* in her part as to be able to conceal entirely the very great effect which the presence of the handsome stranger produced upon her ; and her admiring eyes told a different tale from her childish words.

A man like Mr. Malcolm, so accustomed to be sought after, flattered, and courted, was not likely to be obtuse enough not to

perceive the impression he had created, and ever ready to adapt himself to every circumstance that might conduce to his benefit, he did not hesitate to enter into all the little griefs and innocent desires of the fair Sophia, and vow eternal friendship to his charming new acquaintance.

Sophia always began with friendship : it sanctioned little services, which entailed the writing of notes, the notes grew up into letters, and a regular correspondence, well managed, and carried on with spirit, “who could tell where it might end?”

Misgivings of that “end” certainly did cross the mind of Mr. Malcolm, as he sat upon the sofa by the fire, in the half-darkened retreat of Miss Somersett Brown, and more than once, as she looked sweetly up in his face, he contrasted her with his own dear child at home — his frank, fresh, noble-

hearted Geneviève. His doubts of the immaculate Sophia were not diminished by the comparison; but he had too many matters of importance upon his mind at that moment to give her character any very serious consideration.

One whole day remained of his visit, and Mrs. Somersett Brown was at her wit's end to find employment for her guest which should occupy all the morning. He would, if left alone, infallibly stray into the garden; and its hideous state of dirt and untidiness would not prejudice him much in favour of "her Wednesdays," which she eternally held out as the most attractive feature in the *programme* of the next season's amusements.

Happily, what all her manœuvres might have failed to accomplish, was brought about by the most simple fact imaginable, and easily to have been anticipated in the mid-

dle of February. A heavy shower of sleet and snow set in while breakfast was on the table, and, together with a bitter east wind, did not make the day very tempting for an excursion in a fly.

What a relief to the agitated nerves of the mistress of Sycamore Lodge! She had been all night trying to devise some party of pleasure for the day, and even meditated a drive into town "to see something" though there was nothing to see except Madame Tussaud's exhibition. How delighted she was when she suddenly found herself extricated from her dilemma! Every flake of snow that fell, warmed her heart. Her only terror was least they should cease before they had formed an impervious concealment to her garden.

"Dear me!" she exclaimed, rising from the breakfast table, and going to the window;

“how very provoking this snow is! I wanted so much to have got out, and shown you my garden, Mr. Malcolm.”

“I should like it extremely, if you are not afraid to venture,” said Mr. Malcolm, civilly, but with a rueful look at the weather.

“You have seen nothing of our grounds yet. Everything was just begining to look so green.—The crocuses are coming out too. Really this is a most enjoyable place.”

And Mrs. Somerset Brown, rested her eyes lovingly on the three scraggy Sycamore trees in the middle of the garden, which had given their name to the lodge.

“Oh, mamma, pray do not go out to-day,” said Meliora, in the softest tone of anxiety; “Mr. Malcolm, pray do not let dear mamma expose herself to the cold. She cannot bear the least east wind—pray make

her stay at home. She is so devoted to her flowers and garden, it makes her quite imprudent."

"I am sure Mrs. Somersett Brown, will listen to reason. The weather is certainly not very genial for gardening," replied Mr. Malcolm, and he too, walked to the window.

"Oh! how pretty the snow is," cried Sophia, jumping up, and following him; I should like to go out and make a snow ball."

"And spoil your pretty hands," said Mr. Malcolm with a smile, as he glanced at the little radish like fingers that Sophia hastily plunged into the pockets of her embroidered apron.

"Oh! I should'nt mind that. Now do look at that robin! And I declare, there's a blackbird, too! I must give them some crumbs;" and running back to the breakfast

table, she began to gather up the broken bits of bread.

“But, mamma,” she exclaimed, stopping short in her occupation, as if struck by a sudden idea.

“All the people that are coming here to-night will be snowed up on the road; what shall we do, we ought to send a policeman to the end of the lane.”

Dexterous Sophia! that little phrase—‘all the people,’ was yet more welcome to the straining ear of Mrs. Somersett Brown than the snow flakes to her longing eye. As usual she was running her chance of finding an expedient, to the last minute, and had not yet ventured to hint to Mr. Malcolm that the literary *soirée* she had announced to him for that evening, in colours so glowing he naturally expected, that every one celebrated for wit and talent was about to

make an appearance, would consist merely of two or three superannuated tenth-rate authors and penurious dowagers, who would rather go anywhere than stay at home.

These were the only persons among the many, who had not declined the invitations, which, for the last few weeks, Mrs. Somerset Brown had been dispensing with a lavish hand. The snow, now, was a most legitimate excuse, and according as it fell thicker, the courage of the ladies of Sycamore Lodge mounted higher, and from insinuations they ventured to names, and did not hesitate to cite a whole catalogue of very dear friends who were to have been with them that evening.

To Mr. Malcolm it was a matter of very little importance. He was going away the next day, and he did not much care, whether he had any better amusement than

flirting with the tender Sophia for a couple of hours in the dusk or not. His object had been the votes of Mr. Somerset Brown, and the smiles of the daughter had not changed his views. The votes were still the prize, for which alone he patiently endured the diminutive bed, and the newly painted room at Sycamore Lodge.

He had not yet spoken to Mr. Brown upon the subject; he wished first to secure the good offices of the ladies of the family. Had they possessed the power which he ascribed to them, there would not have been much doubt of their compliance with his request. All three were enchanted with him. They did not know which most to admire in him, his looks or his manners, or his agreeable words. He seemed to them a creature of a different sphere to those they were accustomed to behold. As Meliora

expressed herself—in the conference privately held with her mother and sister, in the attic—“They had never seen such a man before *close*.”

It was true enough. Others of equal refinement might have glided past them in the great world, but no such individual had ever before entered the doors of Sycamore Lodge. Would he ever return?

Meliora, of course, decided that he could not. The languishing Sophia sighed and hoped, and looked conscious; and Mrs. Somersett Brown, with a heart throbbing with exultation, already anticipated the splendid effect which the fine figure and striking appearance of Mr. Malcolm would produce the following season at her “Wednesdays.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I REALLY think I heard a carriage drive up to the door," cried Sophia, as early after dinner the small party at Sycamore Lodge were assembled in the drawing-room.

"It was snowing hard a minute ago," replied her father, who was not the least aware of the agonized efforts that had been made to collect people for that particular evening.

"I do not think you could expect any visitor this evening. It must be some very powerful attraction which would get me out

on such a night," said Mr. Malcolm, looking at Sophia, who, in a black velvet gown exceedingly off her shoulders, an immense white tulle scarf disposed in drapery round her—but, of course, worn below her waist, instead of above it—was seated, as usual, on a low footstool by the fire, and looking up innocently into his face.

"Still, I am sure, I heard a carriage," she persisted.

"Yes, and there is a knock at the door! I dare say it is Lady Marchmont, or Lady Windermere. They always come to us so early," replied Mrs. Somerset Brown, carelessly.

"Two such great ladies lost in the snow, in the wilds of Hampstead, what news that will be for the world," said Mr. Malcolm, with a smile; but the selection of names hastily made by Mrs. Somerset Brown had not

been fortunate. Both ladies were intimate friends of his, and consequently he well knew were neither in town, nor likely to trouble Sycamore Lodge with their presence.

A little bustle in the hall gave positive tokens of an arrival, and in a few moments the door was thrown open, and the voice of Thomas announced in very loud tones—
“Mrs. Marcia Craggs, and the Marquise de Bourrique.”

“My dear Mrs. Craggs,” said Mrs. Somersett Brown, in her blandest tone, and advancing to meet her. “This is most kind of you—so friendly, coming to see us poor people at the top of our hill.”

“Oh, my dear Mrs. Somersett Brown,” replied Mrs. Craggs, in a brogue that made Mr. Malcolm start and turn round in his chair, “you know how zealous I am for my friends, and I have brought the Marquise

de Bourrique, who was so anxious to know you—you have read her charming new work, of course; and Huntley and Western are coming, so you see I have not been idle."

All this was said in a very patronizing way, with the broad hand of the speaker, in a dirty glove, spread out on the folded arms of Mrs. Somerset Brown, who stood smiling before her literary friend, while heartily ashamed of her, and her companion. She, however, so far repressed her feelings, as to be able to say a few civil words to the *soi disant* Marquise a bold, staring woman, in a tawdry dress, intended to be in the French fashion; for she had been brought up in France, by a Mrs. Sinclair, who had nothing else to do, and took her when a child, though she was of the lowest possible origin.

The young ladies now came forward. "And how do *you* do, fairest Sophia, and my pensive Meliora?" was the greeting of the affectionate Mrs. Craggs, as holding a hand in each of hers, she surveyed them admiringly from head to foot, and having bestowed an overpowering eulogium on their good looks, Sophia retreated to her footstool in the corner, Meliora to the tea-table, and Mrs. Somerset Brown was left at liberty to do the honours of her fine guest, whom she introduced with all the ceremony possible to her visitor.

Mrs. Marcia Craggs made a low curtsy, and, sidling across the room, addressed herself to the stranger with an impudent familiarity that was quite a novelty to him. After one look of surprise, however, he gave no other sign of any unusual impression having been produced upon him by the

first onset of Mrs. Craggs's conversation, but continued to talk in his own quiet way, and as if he thoroughly understood the variety of subjects which the lady in her usual slip-slop style contrived to introduce into her discourse.

He heard what she said, or he could not have replied; but, far from listening or digesting its materials, he was busy in taking an accurate survey of what seemed to him the most extraordinary figure he had ever beheld. Not only did Mrs. Craggs, as Meliora had described, rejoice in the double peculiarity of squinting and wearing rouge of the most fiery red, but one shoulder was considerably above the other, and she always walked sideways. Her face, set off by a black velvet hat, with dirty white *pleureuse* feathers, was ugly, withered, and malevolent. She wore a faded and well-

creased crimson gown, of bad English velvet, the body cut extremely low, which gave her an opportunity that she incessantly made use of, of examining and apparently admiring her frightful neck and shoulders, that looked as if they were covered with Russia leather. Such a caricature never was seen.

Mr. Malcolm had heard of Mrs. Marcia Craggs, as she chose to designate herself, but merely 'as a dreadful quiz,' but he had not the least idea what she was like. On the strength of some vulgar novels which she had concocted half a century before everybody found out that they could write, she set up for a literary authority, informed every one who could spare time to listen to her, that she was another Madame de Sevigné, only better dressed, and that she was actually torn to pieces by the

crowds of celebrities, who were all dying to gain admittance to her *salon*.

No system of puffing ever adopted by George Robins could approach that of Mrs. Craggs. It was the most wearisome thing in the world to be condemned to listen to her, and the marvel was, why she took the trouble of stringing together so many fabrications, when looking at her for a moment was sufficient to convince every body they were such.

But her impudence was unequalled, except by her falsehood and detraction; and, although her reputation in her youth had been as bad as possible, she would stand in the middle of her miserable room, in the suburbs of Islington, and descant loudly on the vices of society, as she endeavoured to tear to pieces the fair fame of all—and they were many—who had slighted her.

Every thing about her was false, frippery, and vulgar ; and her nutshell of a house, of which she made a continual boast, was just of the same stamp. Every thing in it was bad—there were bad pictures, bad busts, bad china, bad miniatures, and bad flowers. Cotton velvet *portières* adorned the doors—the chairs were hard and rickety—and the sofas, under shelter of their faded red *tabaret*, were so worn and uneven, that it was martyrdom to sit upon them.

This was the modern Sevigné and her *salon*, and few people would have troubled themselves to remember her existence, had it not been for the chance of beholding such a curiosity, afforded by some good-natured person, of an intermediate race like Mrs. Somersett Brown, who, having very few other people, was forced sometimes to undergo Mrs. Craggs and her friends, sooner than be alone

It is true, that Mrs. Somerset Brown did not always view her dear friend with the same unfavourable eye, as upon the present occasion ; for the fair mistress of Sycamore Lodge, resolutely intent upon always maintaining the *éclat* of ‘her Wednesdays,’ had a passion for what she called ‘lions,’ and had privately commissioned Mrs. Craggs always to be on the look out, and procure for her as many of them on ‘her Wednesdays’ as possible.

Now, though it usually happened that Mrs. Craggs only brought with her, lions as bad or worse than herself, Mrs. Somerset Brown was anything but dissatisfied. These sweepings of the highways were better than nothing ; and she comforted herself with the idea that, as they were generally foreigners, no one knew exactly who they were.

: A few awkward *rencontres* had certainly

been the result of these promiscuous additions to her menagerie. An Indian chief had been recognised as a courier, and an Italian princess as something much worse ; but still Mrs. Somerset Brown talked on, with her broad face very red, and her eye watching warily the diminution of her gooseberry fool and water.

The “Wednesdays” must go on at any cost ; but it was not the same when she had brought her friend Mrs. Craggs into such close communication with a new acquaintance, whose good opinion she valued so highly.

As she listened to her forward remarks, and the flippant conversation with which she was endeavouring to insinuate herself into the good graces of Mr. Malcolm, Mrs. Somerset Brown actually blushed. One of the favourite themes with which Mrs. Craggs

thought fit to entertain him, was the beauty of Lady Mannering and her sister, who she pretended to know by sight ; but this was a subject which Mr. Malcolm always seemed anxious to avoid ; and when she heard the persevering woman actually insist upon a promise of an introduction to his daughter during the ensuing season, which was laughingly parried by Mr. Malcolm, Mrs. Somerset Brown's heart sunk within her

It was her own object—the chief object of her own inordinate attentions to their father, for Mrs. Brown was too cunning to allow herself undue indulgence in the hope that already agitated the bosom of the gentle Sophia. A man of his age, she well knew was not so easily caught, as one of the more inexperienced, and therefore her own objects were of quite as much importance as those which her daughters might cherish.

Neither, however, was likely to be much advanced by boring Mr. Malcolm to death, and it was therefore with serious anxiety that she endeavoured to detach Mrs. Craggs from him. She might however have spared herself the trouble. The lady with the rich brogue, so seldom got hold of a victim of such note, that she clung to him with a feverish tenacity.

In that small room it was impossible to escape from her adhesive powers, and with the exception of a few words now and then from the master of the house, which Mrs. Craggs scarcely permitted him to utter, the conversation was carried on solely between these two.

The evening passed slowly away, but little enlivened by the execrable singing of the Marquise de Bourrique who was exceedingly sulky at the little notice taken

of her by any of the party. The two literary gentlemen, announced by Mrs. Craggs, never arrived ; and it was very late when she at length rose to take her leave—having first exacted a promise from Mr. Malcolm, that he would call upon her the next day, as he passed through town, in order to make the acquaintance of her husband, Mr. Peter Craggs, a paralytic old man, who had been on the point of being knighted (as she said) for his services in the rebellion, although most people doubted the fact.

CHAPTER XIX.

IT must be owned that it was a great relief to Mr. Malcolm when he was at length permitted to seek the shelter of his own apartment. Between the tenderness of the insinuating Sophia, the assiduities of Mrs. Somersett Brown, and the familiarity of that dressed-up Sycorax, and her brazen companion, his patience and good manners had been taxed to the utmost, and he looked forward with no little pleasure to the next morning, when he should make his escape from the delights of Sycamore Lodge.

As he shut himself into his room, its clean and comfortable appearance struck him for the first time. A bright fire made it look still more cheerful ; and feeling no inclination to sleep, he intended to sit down in his arm-chair by the fireside, and finish a novel which he had been reading during the morning.

The book was lying on the dressing-table, but as he advanced to take it up, his eye was suddenly caught by a letter which was placed by its side. He, of course, immediately took it up, and at first imagined it might possibly be the forerunner of the regular correspondence with which the industrious Sophia had threatened him.

It, however, bore no traces of a lady's hand. It was very dirty, had been re-directed more than once, and the word "Immediate" gave tokens of the writer, at

least having been in a hurry, that it should quickly reach its destination.

With a gesture of surprise, as he observed the foreign post-mark, Mr. Malcolm threw himself into his chair, and tore open the letter. It was very short, and merely contained these words :—

“ SIR,—

“ I leave this next week for England ; some business will detain me a few days at Liverpool, but I hope to be in London by the 15th of February, and beg to see you immediately, either at 52, Fenchurch Street, or, if more convenient, I will run down to Camerford House. It is urgent I should see you at once, as I have unpleasant affairs to talk over.—Your obedient servant,

“ WILLIAM WHARTON.

“ Mount Martinvale, Kingston, Jamaica.”

The letter was from Mr. Malcolm's man of business, who in common with most of his class, might safely have omitted the last sentence, the visits of a man of business seldom announcing anything very delightful. As it so happened, however, it had scarcely reached the eye of Mr. Malcolm, when a sudden pallor overspread his face. He grew actually livid when he first recognised the hand-writing, and sat as if turned to stone, still holding the letter before him.

After some time, he laid it down—then hurriedly took it up and examined the date. It was just a month since it had been written. The writer was therefore in England, and expecting his reply. The letter had evidently been travelling after him, during his tour of visits and had gone first to Camerford House, and then to Mannering Park, for it bore the Burnham post-mark.

He ought to have received it long before. It appeared, however, to have come quite soon enough, as far as any agreeable associations were concerned, for Mr. Malcolm, usually so calm and collected, was strangely agitated by it. His hands trembled, and with a hasty gesture, he wiped the perspiration from his brow.

He read and re-read the letter at least a hundred times. All night long this agony endured; without undressing he threw himself upon his bed—but it was only to rise again immediately from it, and read over and over the fatal letter which had thus cruelly disturbed him. He seemed to writhe with pain, as he looked upon it, and as he turned towards the light of the candle, years seemed in a moment to have been added to his life.

Day-light came, and made him look still

more cadaverous than before. He had entered that room, a fine fresh handsome man, looking so young, that no one would have believed him to be the father of a married daughter, and now, he seemed actually to have withered as he stood.

It must have been a powerful blow that could shake so firm a man.

The light grew stronger, and Mr. Malcolm hastily drew back the curtains that shaded the window. He would have left the house instantly, if he could. His carriage which was to come from town, was not ordered till twelve o'clock, and, in the state of nervous excitement which the letter had produced, it seemed impossible to wait for that hour.

He first thought of walking immediately to London, then of going to the village and ordering a fly. The latter seemed to pro-

mise the most speedy relief from his difficulties, and he therefore resolved to make the attempt. He went down stairs, but, as he might have anticipated, he found the hall-door locked, and the key was no where to be seen. As the lower windows of the house opened to the ground, there was little difficulty in obtaining egress in that way ; but, arrived in the garden, his position was by no means improved.

There was but one little door opening to the lane, at the further end of the garden, and that was carefully locked. It was marvellous that a man of his sagacity could have imagined that people would leave their doors open all night, especially in the vicinity of London ; but Mr. Malcolm seemed as much disappointed and surprised at the occurrence, as if it were the most natural thing in the world that they should do so.

He turned back from the door with a vexed and harassed look, and hastily retraced his steps towards the house. But, distracted by his own thoughts, he was like a person who does not see where he is going; and, as soon as he arrived at the house, he turned off in another direction, and continued to pace round and round the small enclosure—which Mrs. Somersett Brown called her “grounds”—with an almost frantic impatience.

It appeared, at last, as if his own footsteps had attracted his attention; and, as he stopped and looked round upon the objects near him, he, for the first time, perceived the diminutive size of the house and garden.

Could this be the vaunted ground of “the Wednesdays,” of which he had heard so much? A faint smile overspread his

pale face, as he thought of Mrs. Somersett Brown and her littlenesses. There were such large sorrows in his own heart. Why were two people, on the same spot, to have such different feelings, and hopes, and fears? He almost envied the square, happy woman who was reposing beneath the roof on which his eye rested. He certainly envied the birds that came hopping on the ground before him, where his footmarks had destroyed their enemy, the snow.

He felt disposed to moralize—to forgive ; and as he looked upon the house he was so anxious to quit, a feeling of pity for a moment stole over his heart—pity for the monstrous follies and pretensions he had witnessed, and remorse for having encouraged them chiefly for his own ends.

After all, what in their conduct was different from his own ? They were all playing

their parts. The upstart Mrs. Somerset Brown—the intriguing Sophia—the forward Mrs. Craggs, and her friend, the impudent Marquise de Bourrique, were all endeavouring to push themselves on in the world, and by showing false colours, exact a consideration to which they had no claim.

What had he been doing all his life? The still small voice of conscience for a moment made itself heard. The hour—the solitude, and the terrible pang that shot through his heart, as he thought of the fatal letter he had received, had, for the moment, softened his nature; but, alas! it was but for a moment. A sound reached him from the house, and, in an instant, recalled him to himself. He rose, and went towards the window, by which he had entered the garden. It was still open,

and the housemaid, with a panic-stricken visage, was unbarring its neighbours.

Hastily muttering something about "an early walk," he rushed by her, and locked himself into his room. The whole house was astir, and it behoved him, if he did not want to excite attention, which might be very annoying, to resume his composure as he best could. It was no easy matter, but to a man of his habits, it was practicable. It was not the first time he had smiled with a breaking heart.

Never had Mr. Malcolm looked more handsome, or in better spirits than when, at the usual time, he seated himself at the breakfast table of Mrs. Somerset Brown. Every one of the beautiful white teeth, which had so captivated the ready heart of the tender Sophia, could have been seen over and over again, as he smilingly re-

counted his adventures of the morning, and the alarm they had evidently produced.

“I believe,” he said, turning to Mrs. Somerset Brown, “your housemaid was fully persuaded some midnight burglars had been at work at your lower window. It is lucky you have no very zealous policeman on your hill, or I might have breakfasted at the nearest station-house.”

“I am *so* sorry, *so* grieved not to have been up in time to share your ramble;” exclaimed the lady addressed, “I should have *so* liked to have escorted you through the grounds.”

“*The grounds!*” All Mr. Malcolm’s new found sympathy vanished, and he fell back immediately into his old ways.

“Oh! it was much too cold for you, my dear Mrs. Brown, and my walk was much too long; and besides that, I could see nothing

for the snow—what a quantity to have fallen in one night.”

“Quite frightful!” exclaimed Mrs. Somerset Brown, affectedly, and at the same time drawing a long breath. Mr. Malcolm had seen nothing—neither the puddles nor the dirt, nor the weeds. Her romancings might still continue.

“I hope, however, you will see the place in much greater perfection in the summer. I may count upon you for my Wednesdays, Mr. Malcolm,” said the lady, in her most seducing manner.

“Oh! without fail!—my dear Mrs. Brown. Count upon me ever as the humblest of your slaves!” and Mr. Malcolm ended his speech by a very expressive look at Sophia.

“Must you go to day?” asked the young lady, softly, as she fidgetted upon her chair.

“Indeed, I am sorry to say, I must—I have people coming to me, and I must be at Camerford House to dinner,” was the reply—although he crushed the letter as he spoke in his pocket, and thought of Fenchurch Street, and No. 52.

“How happy your daughter will be to see you!” said Meliora, softly—“I am always miserable when dear papa is away.”

“But shall I not see Mr. Brown?” asked Mr. Malcolm, suddenly recollecting he had not made his appearance that morning.

“I am afraid it will be quite impossible,” replied Mrs. Somerset Brown; “he has alarming symptoms of his old enemy, the gout, coming on, and I fear cannot get down stairs.”

“But I can go to him—if he can’t come to me—I shall be delighted to pay him a

visit," said Mr. Malcolm, with alacrity, as he thought of the eight votes.

"Oh! pray don't think of such a thing!" exclaimed Mrs. Brown, growing extremely red, as she remembered the dirty attic; "his room is at the top of the house—he will sleep there, on account of the air. I will make your adieux for you to him, Mr. Malcolm, and most sorry I am to be obliged to do so."

These last words—the only true ones she had spoken—were instantly echoed by her disconsolate daughters.—Truly sorry were they, indeed, to see their pleasant guest departing.

"And perhaps, Mrs. Brown, you will say for me, also, what I ought long since to have said for myself—Mr. Brown, I know, has a large property at Wallingborough. I am going to stand for the county—may

I venture to ask him for his support and interest? Will you undertake it for me?"

"Most willingly," replied Mrs. Somersett Brown; "and if I have any influence, I think you may count upon success."

"Dear me! cried Sophia, lispingly: "are you going to have an election? I never saw an election. I should like so to see one—what colours will you have, Mr. Malcolm?"

"Blue and white, I think," replied Mr. Malcolm, with a meaning look at the streamers of Sophia's cap. "I had not settled that part of the business—but you will let me know about the votes?"

"Oh, yes! I will write to you," said Sophia, tenderly, offering her hand, as Mr. Malcolm rose to depart.

"Sophia is the great writer of the family," said Mrs. Somersett Brown, apolo-

getically, in order to cover the forwardness of her daughter.

“ I shall be too grateful, if any lady takes the trouble of writing to an old man like me,” said Mr. Malcolm, with a smile. “ And now, indeed, I must say good-bye— I must tear myself away. If I staid longer, I should never go at all.”

In a few moments all the ladies had finished saying, “ Good-bye;” and very soon after the clock had struck twelve, Mr. Malcolm was seated in his carriage.

“ Set me down at the club,” he said in a loud voice, to the footman who shut the door of the carriage.

“ What a happy man !” exclaimed poor Sophia, as she watched the handsome horses of Mr. Malcolm stepping proudly down the lane.

“ And what a happy woman his wife will

be," replied Meliora, looking spitefully at her sister. "I dare say he will marry soon. He is sure to make a great match, whenever he likes it."

CHAPTER XX.

At the corner of the New Road, Mr. Malcolm stopped his carriage, and desiring his servants to proceed at once with it to his club, he walked on until he met a cab, in which, having ensconced himself, he ordered the man to take him to Fenchurch Street.

The agony of mind he endured seemed to increase as he drew nearer to the appointed place of meeting. What was he about to hear? Any news from Jamaica of an unfavourable nature might at once involve him

in destruction, for he had entered into speculations in that island of so daring and hazardous a nature, that the failure of any one part of them might entail a general crash.

All this was a profound secret from his friends in England. Some people might know, or guess "that he had a great deal of property abroad," but whether it was in Canada or Hindostan, no one had ever taken the trouble to enquire. Little did they imagine that the rich Mr. Malcolm, who lived in such splendour, was in reality a very poor man, and worse than poor, that he was living on his principal, the principal of money he had borrowed, thus every day adding to the accumulation of his debts, which were rising like an ocean around him.

For a great many years this had been his system, and to sustain himself in the eyes of

the world, and contrive to pay the exorbitant interest of the various sums that he had borrowed, he had had recourse to practices which would scarcely bear the light, and leagued himself with many persons whose characters did not add any lustre to his own.

Among them was this very man, Wharton, whose letter had thrown him into such violent agitation. He had been, when located in England, a money-lender—a sort of man ready to do any dirty job, where his employer dared not appear, and equally ready to turn against him whenever he could make better terms elsewhere.

For several years past he had resided entirely in Jamaica, where he was entrusted by Mr. Malcolm with the chief management of his business, which comprised the agencies of most of the great properties of the island.

To support this, and sundry other smaller speculations, Mr. Malcolm had nothing but his own estate in Jamaica, which, though large could never be safely counted upon, and a floating capital of borrowed money, for which, of course, no small interest had been demanded.

It is not surprising that with this position of affairs, Mr. Malcolm should have had many moments of deep anxiety ; but hitherto his career had been one of unexampled success—success derived partly from his extraordinary activity and the fertility of resource which he possessed in a remarkable degree—and partly, it must be owned, to the many victims he and his worthy associates had contrived to discover, and render willing to risk their all by an implicit reliance on his word.

The complication of his affairs would have

puzzled a calculating machine. He had not an acre of land unmortgaged ; but as credit was the only means by which he could carry on his splendid farce of life, the utmost care had been taken to conceal the true state of his affairs from the knowledge of every class of persons.

Almost all his money transactions had been carried on in Jamaica, and what was done there did not quickly transpire in England. He had himself paid more than one hurried visit to the island, but generally his business was transacted by his agents, and hitherto he had not much reason to complain of their management.

The sudden arrival of Wharton in England had, however, filled him with terror. Among all his confidential advisers, he was the person who was most acquainted with his private affairs ; and, although a man of

exceedingly bad character, he had, as far as Mr. Malcolm was concerned, shown himself a steady and efficient adherent.

With a throbbing heart, Mr. Malcolm watched the slow progress of the poor, starved-looking animal which was slowly dragging him towards the city. Every step seemed to bring him nearer to his doom; for, doomed to evil and sorrow, he had as securely felt, since the receipt of Wharton's letter, as if he had already heard the evil tidings he evidently had to communicate.

At last they reached their destination, and 52 stood in large gold figures on the door of a shop in Fenchurch-street. It was a gas-fitter's shop, and Mr. Malcolm looked hastily for the bell of the offices upstairs. A whole row of brass knobs presented themselves to his view. He chose

the first, and hurriedly pulled it. In due course of time, a dirty girl, slipshod, and with her hair in papers, made her appearance.

“Is Mr. Wharton at home?” Mr. Malcolm inquired.

“Doesn’t live here, Sir !” was the laconic reply.

“He is certainly here—this is 52, Fenchurch-street, is it not?”

“Yes—but there is another besides. There, at that yellow door,” replied the girl, pointing to a baker’s next door.

Mr. Malcolm looked quickly in the direction named, and, on turning round to ask some further questions, he found the obliging damsel had shut the door in his face. This, to a man panting to find the person he sought, was anything but encouraging. He rushed to the next door.

Here, there was but one bell, and an old man having answered his summons, he made the necessary inquiries.

“I can’t say, indeed—don’t know the name of any of our lodgers;” was the intelligent reply.

“But he must be here—I know he is here. Don’t his letters come here?” asked Mr. Malcolm, whose wrath was beginning to rise.

“Don’t know, indeed. I see’d some letters on the hall table, but can’t say who they belonged to. We have nine rooms to mind, and they are all full. There’s work enough to do, and for three-and-sixpence a week too;” said the old man, scratching his head, and turning away his surly face.

Mr. Malcolm hastily stepped within the door, which in another moment he felt would stand between him and his inquiries.

“Mr. Wharton must be here—he certainly lodges here,” he persisted. “A large man—a large man, with a very red face, and a bald head. You could not mistake him.”

“Oh! a stout gentleman,” said the man, hesitatingly.

“Yes—very stout. Has no one seen him? Is there no one there I can speak to?” said Mr. Malcolm, raising his voice and looking down the passage, where sundry whisperings were audible.

“Perhaps it’s the stout gentleman in No. 5, father. There’s another in No. 9, but he hasn’t got no red face,” cried a sharp voice, and a diminutive girl, with black eyes and a very aquiline nose, suddenly showed herself round the corner.

“Thank you, my little girl. Is the gentleman at home?” said Mr. Malcolm, gratefully.

“Pr’aps you’ll like to walk up and see, Sir,” said the old man, with new found civility, and watching the shilling that Mr. Malcolm had taken out of his pocket to give to the little girl. He did not wait for any further invitation, but hastily mounted the stairs, and in a few moments stood before No. 5. The door was locked. In a fury of impatience he shook the handle till it came off in his hand. No one answered from within, but the neighbouring door suddenly opened, and an old woman in a mob cap popped out her head. Without looking who it was she addressed, she said, in a solemn tone—

“If it is Mr. Wharton you want, you will find him at Coutts’ bank;” and she shut the door, without adding another word. Mr. Malcolm went down stairs.

“I knew the stout gentleman was out,”

said the little black-eyed girl, sidling up to him in the passage, in the fond hope of eliciting another shilling from the stranger.

“Then, why didn’t you say so?” said Mr. Malcolm, angrily.

“Well, you didn’t ax me,” said the girl, impudently; “but I see’d him go, and he’d his great coat on.”

“How long is he gone?” said the distracted questioner, initiated for the first time into the comforts of a lodging-house.

“Well—better than half an hour, I think—but you can’t wait here, for there’s no room. The lodgers always takes their keys with them,” said the child, sharply—for no movement of Mr. Malcolm’s hand indicated any farther intentions of generosity.

Without another word, he rushed into the attendant cab, crying with a loud voice—“To Coutts’.”

“Very good, Sir,” said the cabman, shaking himself from a short slumber; and the old white horse was again put in motion. At the end of the street, a waggon was upset—and the usual stoppage, and pushing, and scrambling, was going on, seasoned with sundry oaths.

“Turn back, and go round,” cried Mr. Malcolm, to the driver.

The man—a civil one, for a wonder—prepared to obey, but it was too late—they were hemmed in behind in an instant. There was nothing to be done, but to wait. In due time, the street cleared again, and, without any further impediments, Mr. Malcolm was deposited at the banking-house. There, at least, he met with beings both obliging and intelligent. Mr. Wharton had been there—he came every day for his letters—and was only just gone.

“And where is he gone to?” asked Mr. Malcolm, in a faltering voice, for he felt as if it must be a most useless question.

“Mr. Wharton is gone to Blackwall, Sir,” civilly replied the clerk he had addressed—“he desired all his letters to be kept till to-morrow for him.”

“To Blackwall!” echoed Mr. Malcolm, in dismay.

“Yes, Sir—there is a West India packet in, and Mr. Wharton expected to meet some friends. Very likely he will dine at the tavern, as he said he should not be back till late.”

The suggestion seemed to infuse new life into the listener, and, thanking the man for his intelligence, Mr. Malcolm once more entered his cab, and drove off to Lovegrove’s, at Blackwall.

With throbbing temples and parched

throat he arrived at the end of his journey ; but here, at length, his search was successful ; for, upon inquiry, he found that Mr. Wharton had just arrived, and, with two other gentlemen, was going to sit down to dinner.

Sending in his card, Mr. Malcolm waited in a private room—waited for the man who had come to pronounce his doom. In a few moments the door opened, and a large man entered—a large man with a red face, and a sharp, but not a particularly unkind, expression of countenance.

“Wharton,” said Mr. Malcolm, without any other greeting save firmly grasping his hand, “what is this you have to tell me?”

“We are ruined,” was the laconic reply. “Old Milman is dead—his sons have put his affairs in the hands of trustees—and they have called in the mortgages. We have but

six months. I came off instantly, to see what could be done here."

Mr. Malcolm clasped his hands upon his forehead ; his face was pale as death. Milman was the person to whom the Jamaica estate and Camerford House had been mortgaged. Neither of them were worth half the value that had been advanced upon them.

"Thank Heavens!" said Mr. Malcolm, in a low voice, as after a long pause he wrung Mr. Wharton's hand, "I have one hope left—I have a rich son-in-law."

END OF VOL. I.

13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH ST., LONDON.
MARCH 1855.

NEW AND INTERESTING WORKS

PUBLISHED BY

MESSRS. HURST AND BLACKETT,

SUCCESSORS TO MR. COLBURN.

THE MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF WIL-

LIAM LISLE BOWLES; LATE CANON RESIDENTIARY OF SALISBURY CATHEDRAL, RECTOR OF BREMHILL, &c. By JOHN BOWLES, D.D., ASSISTED BY ALARIC A. WATTS. 3 vols. post 8vo. with Portrait, &c. (*In the press.*)

Among the Correspondents of the Poet of Bremhill, including many of the most distinguished persons of his time, may be enumerated the following:—Byron—Wordsworth—Southey—Coleridge—Moore—Campbell—R. B. Sheridan—Crabbe—Rogers—Milman—Warton—Heber—James Montgomery—The Marquess of Lansdowne—Lord and Lady Holland—Lord Brougham—Sir G. and Lady Beaumont—Sir T. N. Talfourd—Dr. Parr—Archdeacon Cox—Archdeacon Nares—Sir H. Davy—Dugald Stewart—Sir R. Colt Hoare—James Dallaway—Joseph Jekyl—W. Sotheby—W. Giffard—J. G. Lockhart—Professor Wilson—W. Roscoe—W. S. Landor—Madame de Stael—Joanna Baillie—Mrs. Opie—Mrs. Southey, &c. &c.

LORD GEORGE BENTINCK: A POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY. By the RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P. Fifth and cheaper Edition, Revised. Post 8vo. 10s. 6d.

"This biography cannot fail to attract the deep attention of the public. We are bound to say, that as a political biography we have rarely, if ever, met with a book more dexterously handled, or more replete with interest. The history of the famous session of 1846, as written by Disraeli in that brilliant and pointed style of which he is so consummate a master, is deeply interesting. He has traced this memorable struggle with a vivacity and power unequalled as yet in any narrative of Parliamentary proceedings."—*Blackwood's Mag.*

"Mr. Disraeli's tribute to the memory of his departed friend is as graceful and as touching as it is accurate and impartial. No one of Lord George Bentinck's colleagues could have been selected, who, from his high literary attainments, his personal intimacy, and party associations, would have done such complete justice to the memory of a friend and Parliamentary associate. Mr. Disraeli has here presented us with the very type and embodiment of what history should be. His sketch of the condition of parties is seasoned with some of those piquant personal episodes of party manœuvres and private intrigues, in the author's happiest and most captivating vein, which convert the dry details of politics into a sparkling and agreeable narrative."—*Morning Herald.*

LORD PALMERSTON'S OPINIONS AND POLICY; AS

MINISTER, DIPLOMATIST, AND STATESMAN, during more than Forty Years of Public Life. 1 vol. 8vo with Portrait, 12s.

"This work ought to have a place in every political library. It gives a complete view of the sentiments and opinions by which the policy of Lord Palmerston has been dictated as a diplomatist and statesman."—*Chronicle.*

"This is a remarkable and seasonable publication; but it is something more—it is a valuable addition to the historical treasures of our country during more than forty of the most memorable years of our annals. We earnestly recommend the volume to general perusal."—*Standard.*

MEMOIRS OF THE COURTS AND CABINETS OF

GEORGE THE THIRD, FROM ORIGINAL FAMILY DOCUMENTS. By the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS, K.G., &c. Second Edition, Revised. 2 vols. 8vo., with Portraits. 30s.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"These volumes contain much valuable matter. The letters which George, first Marquis of Buckingham, laid by as worthy of preservation have some claim to see the light, for he held more than one office in the State, and consequently kept up a communication with a great number of historical personages. He himself was twice Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, first, under Lord Rockingham, and secondly, under Pitt; his most constant correspondents were his two brothers, William and Thomas Grenville, both of whom spent the chief part of their lives in official employments, and of whom the former is sufficiently known to fame as Lord Grenville. The staple of the book is made up of these family documents, but there are also to be found interspersed with the Grenville narrative, letters from every man of note, dating from the death of the elder Pitt to the end of the century. There are three periods upon which they shed a good deal of light. The formation of the Coalition Ministry in 1783 the illness of the King in 1788, and the first war with Republican France. Lord Grenville's letters to his brother afford a good deal of information on the machinations of the Prince's party, and the conduct of the Prince and the Duke of York during the King's illness."—*The Times*.

"A very remarkable and valuable publication. The Duke of Buckingham has himself undertaken the task of forming a history from the papers of his grandfather and great-uncle, the Earl Temple (first Marquis of Buckingham), and Lord Grenville, of the days of the second Wm. Pitt. The letters which are given to the public in these volumes, extend over an interval commencing with 1782, and ending with 1800. In that interval, events occurred which can never lose their interest as incidents in the history of England. The Coalition Ministry and its dismissal by the King—the resistance of the Sovereign and Pitt to the efforts of the discarded ministers to force themselves again into office—the great constitutional question of the Regency which arose upon the King's disastrous malady—the contest upon that question between the heir apparent and the ministers of the Crown—the breaking out of the French Revolution, and the consequent entrance of England upon the great European war,—these, with the Union with Ireland, are political movements every detail of which possesses the deepest interest. In these volumes, details, then guarded with the most anxious care from all eyes but those of the privileged few, are now for the first time given to the public. The most secret history of many of the transactions is laid bare. It is not possible to conceive contemporary history more completely exemplified. From such materials it was not possible to form a work that would not possess the very highest interest. The Duke of Buckingham has, however, moulded his materials with no ordinary ability and skill. The connecting narrative is written both with judgment and vigour—not unfrequently in a style which comes up to the highest order of historical composition—especially in some of the sketches of personal character. There is scarcely a single individual of celebrity throughout the period from 1782 to 1800 who is not introduced into these pages; amongst others, besides the King and the various members of the royal family, are Rockingham, Shelburne, North, Thurlow, Loughborough, Fox, Pitt, Sheridan, Burke, Portland, Sydney, Fitzwilliam, Tierney, Buckingham, Grenville, Grey, Malmesbury, Wilberforce, Burdett, Fitzgibbon, Grattan, Flood, Cornwallis, the Beresfords, the Ponsonbys, the Wellesleys, &c."—*Morning Herald*.

"These memoirs are among the most valuable materials for history that have recently been brought to light out of the archives of any of our great families."—*Examiner*.

"These volumes are a treasure for the politician, and a mine of wealth for the historian."—*Britannia*.

MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF MAJOR

GENERAL SIR W. NOTT, G.C.B., COMMANDER OF THE ARMY OF CANDAHAR AND ENVOY AT THE COURT OF LUCKNOW. EDITED BY J. H. STOCQUELER, Esq., at the request of the Daughters of the late General, from Private Papers and Official Documents in their possession. 2 vols. 8vo., with Portrait. 28s. bound.

"One of the most valuable and interesting books that can ever claim a permanent place in a British library."—*Standard*.

"These highly interesting volumes give a valuable contribution to the history of India and an admirable portrait of a most distinguished officer."—*John Bull*.

"These Memoirs with the Correspondence included in them will do that justice to the part played by Sir W. Nott in the Affghan war, which it is undeniable preceding works have failed to do."—*Athenæum*.

"These memoirs of General Nott, whom the editor very justly describes as a 'model officer,' have been given to the world at the instigation of the hero's surviving daughters. A more graceful tribute of dutiful affection to the memory of a departed parent it would be difficult to name. It is at once a graphic picture of the soldier's career, and a noble monument of his fame. The work issues from the press at a very fortunate moment. The life of an officer who followed in the footsteps of Wellington, making the Despatches of that illustrious warrior his continual study, will be welcomed by many an aspirant for military renown at this exciting crisis. The volumes form a valuable contribution to the biographical stores of the age. To the young soldier, in particular, they will form a most valuable guide, worthy to be placed by the side of the Despatches of the great Duke of Wellington."—*Messenger*.

"When the late General Nott died, the 'Quarterly Review' expressed a hope that some means would be taken for giving publicity to his private letters and official correspondence, because they so completely illustrated his high and chivalrous character, while a memoir of his life would hold out so admirable a lesson to British statesmen, and so good an example to young officers. We are happy, therefore, to find that, under the able editorship of Mr. Stocqueler, the whole of the most valuable portion of the general's correspondence has just been published in two handsome volumes, which comprise also a most interesting memoir of the gallant hero of Candahar, giving a complete account of the stirring campaign in Afghanistan, and throwing much light upon many important points hitherto left in obscurity. The work will be eagerly welcomed by all—more particularly by military readers and those interested in our Indian dominions."—*Globe*.

"A biography of a first-rate soldier, and a highly honourable man. The book will often be appealed to as a standard authority. A valuable and most authentic addition is here furnished to the true history of transactions which will ever hold a prominent place in the annals of our Indian rule."—*Dublin University Mag.*

"We know not a book after the Wellington Despatches, more deserving of the study of a young officer. It might be made one of the standard manuals of military education."—*Literary Gazette*.

"This book is one of the most interesting records of military life that we possess, and a genuine memorial of one who has achieved a right to be reckoned among England's greatest men."—*Daily News*.

NARRATIVE OF A RESIDENCE AT NEPAUL. BY

CAPTAIN THOMAS SMITH, late ASSISTANT POLITICAL-RESIDENT AT NEPAUL. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"No man could be better qualified to describe Nepaul than Captain Smith; and his concise, but clear and graphic account of its history, its natural productions, its laws and customs, and the character of its warlike inhabitants, is very agreeable and instructive reading. A separate chapter, not the least entertaining in the book, is devoted to anecdotes of the Nepaulese mission, of whom, and of their visit to Europe, many remarkable stories are told."—*Post*.

TURKEY: ITS HISTORY AND PROGRESS; FROM THE JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF SIR JAMES PORTER, Fifteen Years Ambassador at Constantinople, continued to the Present Time, with a Memoir of SIR JAMES PORTER, by his Grandson, SIR GEORGE LARPENT, BART. 2 vols. 8vo., with Illustrations. 30s. bound.

"These volumes are of an authentic character and enduring interest."—*Athenæum*.

"This book forms a very valuable repertory of information in regard to the past and present state of Turkey. Altogether the information is completely given, and for all purposes of reference during the continuance of the struggle in the East, the book will be valuable."—*Examiner*.

"To any of our readers desirous of forming an opinion for himself on the condition and prospects of Turkey, we would advise a careful perusal of this work. No work on the subject could have been better timed, while the information which it contains—unlike the great bulk of those hasty compilations which a sudden demand has called into existence—is not only accurate, but valuable."—*Morning Chronicle*.

"A most interesting, instructive, and valuable work. In no other book that we are aware of, will the reader find the same amount of reliable information respecting the actual condition and resources of the Sultan's dominions."—*Morning Post*.

"In these volumes we have the most complete and accurate description of the past and present position of the Turkish Empire to be found in our language."—*Britannia*.

"These volumes constitute a work for the *future* as well as for the *present*, in other words, a valuable library book as well as a book of great contemporaneous interest. Their permanent value they derive chiefly from the deep research and extensive and minute investigation of their first author, Sir James Porter, their present interest from the acute and lively treatment of the events of the day by his grandson and continuator. In fact, we know not where to find so perfect an account of Turkey in all its relations with the rest of the world, military, political, and, above all, commercial."—*Standard*.

"This highly interesting work consists of two parts. The first volume, after a memoir of Sir James Porter, proceeds to give a general description of the Turkish Empire, of its natural and industrial productions, and its commerce, a sketch of its history from the invasion of Europe to the reign of Sultan Mahmud II., and an account of the religion and the civil institutions of the Turks, and of their manners and customs, chiefly from the data supplied by the papers of Sir James Porter. In the second volume we are made acquainted with Turkey as it is; the religious and civil government of Turkey, its Legislature, the state of education in the Empire, its finances, its military and naval strength, and the social condition of the Turks, are all in succession brought under review. The work gives a fuller and more life-like picture of the present state of the Ottoman Empire, than any other work with which we are acquainted."—*John Bull*.

"No publication upon the state and prospects of the Ottoman Empire, with which we are acquainted can compare with the work now under notice for general utility. In addition to investigations into the legislature of Turkey, its civil and religious government, its educational institutions, and the system of instruction, its finances, military and naval resources, and the social condition of the people, ample details are given of its history, and a short account of the progress of the actual struggle. These researches are interspersed with journals and letters, which impart a charming interest to the volumes. We hail the appearance of these volumes with satisfaction, as accurate information both on the history and the actual condition of Turkey is much needed. Good books are ever welcome, and this is a good book, coming into our possession at the critical moment when it is most required."—*Messenger*.

THE LIFE OF MARIE DE MEDICIS, QUEEN OF

FRANCE, CONSORT OF HENRY IV., AND REGENT UNDER LOUIS XIII.

By MISS PARDOE, Author of "Louis XIV, and the Court of France, in the 17th Century," &c. Second Edition. 3 large vols. 8vo. with fine Portraits.

"A fascinating book. The history of such a woman as the beautiful, impulsive, earnest, and affectionate Marie de Medicis could only be done justice to by a female pen, impelled by all the sympathies of womanhood, but strengthened by an erudition by which it is not in every case accompanied. In Miss Pardoe the unfortunate Queen has found both these requisites, and the result has been a biography combining the attractiveness of romance with the reliableness of history, and which, taking a place midway between the 'frescoed galleries' of Thierry, and the 'philosophic watch-tower of Guizot,' has all the pictorial brilliancy of the one, with much of the reflective speculation of the other."—*Daily News*.

"A work of high literary and historical merit. Rarely have the strange vicissitudes of romance been more intimately blended with the facts of real history than in the life of Marie de Medicis; nor has the difficult problem of combining with the fidelity of biography the graphic power of dramatic delineation been often more successfully solved than by the talented author of the volumes before us. As a personal narrative, Miss Pardoe's admirable biography possesses the most absorbing and constantly sustained interest; as a historical record of the events of which it treats, its merit is of no ordinary description."—*John Bull*.

MEMOIRS OF THE BARONESS D'OBERKIRCH,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE COURTS OF FRANCE, RUSSIA, AND GERMANY. WRITTEN BY HERSELF, and Edited by Her Grandson, the COUNT DE MONTERISON. 3 vols. post 8vo. 3ls. 6d.

The Baroness d'Oberkirch being the intimate friend of the Empress of Russia, wife of Paul I., and the confidential companion of the Duchess of Bourbon, her facilities for obtaining information respecting the most private affairs of the principal Courts of Europe, render her Memoirs unrivalled as a book of interesting anecdotes of the royal, noble and other celebrated individuals who flourished on the continent during the latter part of the last century. Among the royal personages introduced to the reader in this work, are Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, Philip Egalité, and all the Princes of France then living—Peter the Great, the Empress Catherine, the Emperor Paul, and his sons Constantine and Alexander, of Russia—Frederick the Great and Prince Henry of Prussia—the Emperor Joseph II. of Austria—Gustavus III, of Sweden—Princess Christina of Saxony—Sobieski, and Czartoriski of Poland—and the Princes of Brunswick and Wurtemberg. Among the most remarkable persons are the Princes and Princesses de Lamballe, de Ligne and Galitzin—the Dukes and Duchesses de Choiseul, de Mazarin, de Boufflers, de la Vallière, de Guiche, de Penthievre, and de Polignac—Cardinal de Rohan, Marshals Biron and d'Harcourt, Count de Staremberg, Baroness de Krudener, Madame Geoffrin, Talleyrand, Mirabeau, and Necker—with Count Cagliostro, Mesmer, Vestris, and Madame Mara; and the work also includes such literary celebrities as Voltaire, Condorcet, de la Harpe, de Beaumarchais, Rousseau, Lavater, Bernoulli, Raynal, de l'Epée, Huber, Göthe, Wieland, Malesherbes, Marmontel, de Stael and de Genlis; with some singular disclosures respecting those celebrated Englishwomen, Elizabeth Chudleigh, Duchess of Kingston, and Lady Craven, Margravine of Anspach.

"A keen observer, and by position thrown in the high places of the world, the Baroness d'Oberkirch was the very woman to write Memoirs that would interest future generations. We commend these volumes most heartily to every reader. They are a perfect magazine of pleasant anecdotes and interesting characteristic things. We lay down these charming volumes with regret. They will entertain the most fastidious readers, and instruct the most informed."—*Examiner*.

THE LIFE OF MARGUERITE D'ANGOULEME,

QUEEN OF NAVARRE, SISTER OF FRANCIS I., from numerous Original Sources, including MS. Documents in the Bibliothèque Impériale, and the Archives du Royaume de France, and the Private Correspondence of Queen Marguerite with Francis I. By MISS FREER. 2 vols., with fine Portraits, engraved by Heath, 21s. bound.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"This is a very complete and cleverly-written life of the illustrious sister of Francis I., and it may be said of her that the varied and interesting stores of French history offer no theme more worthy of research and study than the career of this great princess, who exercised so potent an influence over the politics and manners of the age of which she was herself the brightest ornament. The published and manuscript documents and letters relating to the life of Marguerite of Navarre, and which are indispensable to a correct biography of this queen, are widely dispersed. The author has spared no cost or trouble in endeavouring to obtain all that were likely to elucidate her character and conduct. She has furnished us with a very interesting and graphic sketch of the singular events and the important personages who took part in them during this stormy and remarkable period of French and English history."—*Observer*.

"This is a very useful and amusing book. It is a good work, very well done. The authoress is quite equal in power and grace to Miss Strickland. She must have spent a great time and labour in collecting the information, which she imparts in an easy and agreeable manner. It is difficult to lay down her book after having once begun it. This is owing partly to the interesting nature of the subject, partly to the skilful manner in which it has been treated. No other life of Marguerite has yet been published, even in France. Indeed, till Louis Philippe ordered the collection and publication of manuscripts relating to the History of France, no such work could be published. It is difficult to conceive how, under any circumstances, it could have been done better."—*Standard*.

"There are few names more distinguished than that of Marguerite d'Angoulême in the range of female biography, and the writer of this work has done well in taking up a subject so copious and attractive. It is altogether an interesting and well-written biography."—*Literary Gazette*.

"A work of high literary and historic merit. It is full of absorbing and constantly sustained interest. In these volumes will be found not alone an incalculable amount of historical information, but a store of reading of a charming and entrancing character, and we heartily commend them as deserving general popularity."—*Sunday Times*.

"A work which is most acceptable as an addition to our historical stores, and which will place the author in a foremost rank among our female writers of the royal biography of their own sex."—*John Bull*.

"A candidly, carefully, and spiritedly written production, and no one who peruses it with the attention it merits can fail to acquire a complete and accurate knowledge of the interesting life of the best and most graceful woman who ever filled a conspicuous place in the history of mankind."—*Morning Herald*.

"This life of Marguerite d'Angoulême is entitled to high rank amongst the many excellent memoirs of illustrious women for which we have been largely indebted to female authorship. The subject is eminently attractive."—*Morning Post*.

"Throughout these volumes the most intense interest is maintained. Like Carlyle, Miss Freer has written as one whose thoughts and sympathies became assimilated to the age. The biography of Marguerite of Navarre is a work upon which the author has lavished all the resources of her genius."—*Britannia*.

MEMOIRS OF JOHN ABERNETHY, F.R.S. WITH A
VIEW OF HIS WRITINGS, LECTURES, AND CHARACTER. By GEORGE
 MACILWAIN, F.R.C.S., author of "Medicine and Surgery One Inductive
 Science," &c. Second Edition. 2 vols., post 8vo., with Portraits, 21s.

"A memoir of high professional interest."—*Morning Post*.

"These memoirs convey a graphic, and, we believe, faithful picture of the celebrated John Abernethy. The volumes are written in a popular style, and will afford to the general reader much instruction and entertainment."—*Herald*.

"This is a book which ought to be read by every one. The professional man will find in it the career of one of the most illustrious professors of medicine of our own or of any other age—the student of intellectual science, the progress of a truly profound philosopher—and all, the lesson afforded by a good man's life. Abernethy's memory is worthy of a good biographer, and happily it has found one."—*Standard*.

"We hope these volumes will be perused by all our readers. They are extremely interesting, and not only give an account of Abernethy, which cannot fail to be read with benefit, but they discuss incidentally many questions of medicine and medical polity. Mr. Macilwain is fond of anecdotes, and has inserted a great number; this does not render his work less pleasant reading. We recommend it most strongly as an interesting, and, at the same time, instructive treatise."—*Medico-Chirurgical Review*.

THE LITERATURE AND ROMANCE OF NORTHERN
EUROPE; constituting a complete History of the Literature of Sweden,
 Denmark, Norway, and Iceland, with copious Specimens of the most cele-
 brated Histories, Romances, and Popular Legends and Tales, old Chivalrous
 Ballads, Tragic and Comic Dramas, National Songs, Novels and Scenes from
 the Life of the Present Day. By WILLIAM and MARY HOWITT. 2 vols.
 post 8vo. 21s.

"English readers have long been indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Howitt. They have now increased our obligations by presenting us with this most charming and valuable work, by means of which the great majority of the reading public will be, for the first time, made acquainted with the rich stores of intellectual wealth long garnered in the literature and beautiful romance of Northern Europe. From the famous Edda, whose origin is lost in antiquity, down to the novels of Miss Bremer and Baroness Knorring, the prose and poetic writings of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Iceland are here introduced to us in a manner at once singularly comprehensive and concise. It is no dry enumeration of names, but the very marrow and spirit of the various works displayed before us. We have old ballads and fairy tales, always fascinating; we have scenes from plays, and selections from the poets, with most attractive biographies of great men. The songs and ballads are translated with exquisite poetic beauty."—*Sun*.

RULE AND MISRULE OF THE ENGLISH IN
AMERICA. By the Author of "SAM SLICK." 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"We conceive this work to be by far the most valuable and important Judge Haliburton has ever written. While teeming with interest, moral and historical, to the general reader, it equally constitutes a philosophical study for the politician and statesman. It will be found to let in a flood of light upon the actual origin, formation, and progress of the republic of the United States."—*Naval and Military Gazette*.

THE JOURNALS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF

GENERAL SIR HARRY CALVERT, BART., G.C.B. and G.C.H., ADJUTANT-GENERAL OF THE FORCES UNDER H.R.H. THE DUKE OF YORK, comprising the Campaigns in Flanders and Holland in 1793-94; with an Appendix containing His Plans for the Defence of the Country in case of Invasion. Edited by His Son, SIR HARRY VERNEY, BART. 1 vol. royal 8vo., with large maps, 14s.

"Both the journals and letters of Capt. Calvert are full of interest. The letters, in particular, are entitled to much praise. Not too long, easy, graceful, not without wit, and everywhere marked by good sense and good taste—the series addressed by Capt. Calvert to his sister are literary compositions of no common order. With the best means of observing the progress of the war, and with his faculties of judgment exercised and strengthened by experience—a quick eye, a placid temper, and a natural aptitude for language rendered Capt. Calvert in many respects a model of a military critic. Sir Harry Verney has performed his duties of editor very well. The book is creditable to all parties concerned in its production."—*Athenæum*.

RECOLLECTIONS OF MY MILITARY LIFE. BY

COLONEL LANDMANN, Late of the CORPS OF ROYAL ENGINEERS, Author of "Adventures and Recollections." 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"Much as has been written of late years about war and Wellington, we know of nothing that contains so striking a picture of the march and the battle as seen by an individual, or so close and homely a sketch of the Great Captain in the outset of the European career of Sir Arthur Wellesley."—*Spectator*.

"The deserved popularity with which the previous volumes of Colonel Landmann's adventures were received will be increased by the present portion of these interesting and amusing records of a long life passed in active and arduous service. The Colonel's shrewdness of observation renders his sketches of character highly amusing."—*Britannia*.

COLONEL LANDMANN'S ADVENTURES AND RECOLLECTIONS. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"Among the anecdotes in this work will be found notices of King George III., the Dukes of Kent, Cumberland, Cambridge, Clarence, and Richmond, the Princess Augusta, General Garth, Sir Harry Mildmay, Lord Charles Somerset, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Lord Heathfield, Captain Grose, &c. The volumes abound in interesting matter. The anecdotes are one and all amusing."—*Observer*.

"These 'Adventures and Recollections' are those of a gentleman whose birth and profession gave him facilities of access to distinguished society. Colonel Landmann writes so agreeably that we have little doubt that his volumes will be acceptable."—*Athenæum*.

ADVENTURES OF THE CONNAUGHT RANGERS.

SECOND SERIES. By WILLIAM GRATTAN, Esq., late LIEUTENANT CONNAUGHT RANGERS. 2 vols. 21s.

"In this second series of the adventures of this famous regiment, the author extends his narrative from the first formation of the gallant 88th up to the occupation of Paris. All the battles, sieges, and skirmishes, in which the regiment took part, are described. The volumes are interwoven with original anecdotes that give a freshness and spirit to the whole. The stories, and the sketches of society and manners, with the anecdotes of the celebrities of the time, are told in an agreeable and unaffected manner. The work bears all the characteristics of a soldier's straightforward and entertaining narrative."—*Sunday Times*.

PAINTING AND CELEBRATED PAINTERS, ANCIENT and MODERN ; including Historical and Critical Notices of the Schools of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. Edited by LADY JERVIS. 2 vols. post 8vo. 2ls.

"This book is designed to give to the general public a popular knowledge of the History of Painting and the characters of Painters, with especial reference to the most prominent among those of their works which are to be seen in English galleries. It is pleasantly written with the intention of serving a useful purpose. It succeeds in its design, and will be of real use to the multitude of picture seers. As a piece of agreeable reading also, it is unexceptionable."—*Examiner*.

"This useful and well-arranged compendium will be found of value to the amateur, and pleasing as well as instructive to the general reader ; and, to give it still further praise, the collector will find abundance of most useful information, and many an artist will rise from the perusal of the work with a much clearer idea of his art than he had before. We sum up its merits by recommending it as an acceptable handbook to the principal galleries, and a trustworthy guide to a knowledge of the celebrated paintings in England, and that this information is valuable and much required by many thousands is a well-proven fact."—*Sunday Times*.

"In turning over Lady Jervis's pages, we are astonished at the amount of knowledge she has acquired. We can testify to the accuracy of her statements, and to the judiciousness of her remarks. The work will deserve to take rank with those of Waagen and Passavant. To the art-student's attention it is in every respect to be commended."—*Messenger*.

"It is not overstating the merits of the work to describe it as the most complete, and, at the same time, one of the most trustworthy guides to a knowledge of the celebrated paintings in England that has hitherto been published."—*Observer*.

CLASSIC AND HISTORIC PORTRAITS. BY JAMES BRUCE. 2 vols. post 8vo. 2ls.

This work comprises Biographies of the following Classic and Historic Personages :—Sappho, Æsop, Pythagoras, Aspasia, Milto, Agesilaus, Socrates, Plato, Alcibiades, Helen of Troy, Alexander the Great, Demetrius Poliorcetes, Scipio Africanus, Sylla, Cleopatra, Julius Cæsar, Augustus, Tiberius, Germanicus, Caligula, Lollia Paulina, Cæsonia, Boadicea, Agrippina, Poppæa, Otho, Commodus, Caracalla, Heliogabalus, Zenobia, Julian the Apostate, Eudocia, Theodora, Charlemagne, Abelard and Heloise, Elizabeth of Hungary, Dante, Robert Bruce, Ignez de Castro, Agnes Sorrel, Jane Shore, Lucrezia Borgia, Anne Bullen, Diana of Poitiers, Catherine de Medicis, Queen Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, Cervantes, Sir Kenelm Digby, John Sobieski, Anne of Austria; Ninon de l'Enclos, Mlle. de Montpensier, the Duchess of Orleans, Madame de Maintenon, Catherine of Russia, and Madame de Stael.

"A book which has many merits, most of all, that of a fresh and unhacknied subject. The volumes are the result of a good deal of reading, and have besides an original spirit and flavour about them, which have pleased us much. Mr. Bruce is often eloquent, often humorous, and has a proper appreciation of the wit and sarcasm belonging in abundance to his theme. The variety and amount of information scattered through his volumes entitle them to be generally read, and to be received on all hands with merited favour."—*Examiner*.

"We find in these piquant volumes the liberal outpourings of a ripe scholarship, the results of wide and various reading, given in a style and manner at once pleasant and picturesque."—*Athenæum*.

MILITARY LIFE IN ALGERIA. BY THE COUNT P.

DE CASTELLANE. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"We commend this book as really worth perusal. The volumes make us familiarly acquainted with the nature of Algerian experience. St. Arnaud, Canrobert, Changarnier, Cavaignac, Lamoricière, are brought prominently before the reader."—*Examiner*.

"These volumes will be read with extraordinary interest. The vivid manner in which the author narrates his adventures, and the number of personal anecdotes that he tells, engage the reader's attention in an extraordinary manner."—*Sunday Times*.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN ENGLISH SOLDIER IN

THE UNITED STATES' ARMY. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"The novelty characterising these interesting volumes is likely to secure them many readers. In the first place, an account of the internal organization, the manners and customs of the United States' Federal Army, is in itself a novelty, and a still greater novelty is to have this account rendered by a man who had served in the English before joining the American army, and who can give his report after having every opportunity of comparison. The author went through the Mexican campaign with General Scott, and his volumes contain much descriptive matter concerning battles, sieges, and marches on Mexican territory, besides their sketches of the normal chronic condition of the United States' soldier in time of peace."—*Daily News*.

CANADA AS IT WAS, IS, AND MAY BE. BY THE

late LIEUTENANT-COLONEL SIR R. BONNYCASTLE. With an Account of Recent Transactions, by SIR J. E. ALEXANDER, K.L.S., &c. 2 vols., post 8vo. with maps, &c., 21s.

"These volumes offer to the British public a clear and trustworthy statement of the affairs of Canada, and the effects of the immense public works in progress and completed; with sketches of locality and scenery, amusing anecdotes of personal observation, and generally every information which may be of use to the traveller or settler, and the military and political reader."—*Messenger*.

ATLANTIC AND TRANSATLANTIC SKETCHES. BY

CAPTAIN MACKINNON, R.N. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"Captain Mackinnon's sketches of America are of a striking character and permanent value. His volumes convey a just impression of the United States, a fair and candid view of their society and institutions, so well written and so entertaining that the effect of their perusal on the public here must be considerable. They are light, animated, and lively, full of racy sketches, pictures of life, anecdotes of society, visits to remarkable men and famous places, sporting episodes, &c., very original and interesting."—*Sunday Times*.

SPAIN AS IT IS. BY G. A. HOSKINS, ESQ.

2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"To the tourist this work will prove invaluable. It is the most complete and interesting portraiture of Spain that has ever come under our notice."—*John Bull*.

HISTORY OF CORFU; AND OF THE REPUBLIC

OF THE IONIAN ISLANDS. By LIEUT. H. J. W. JERVIS, Royal Artillery. 1 vol. post 8vo. 10s. 6d.

"Written with great care and research, and including probably all the particulars of any moment in the history of Corfu."—*Athenæum*.

THE MOSLEM AND THE CHRISTIAN; OR, ADVEN-

TURES IN THE EAST. By SADYK PASHA. Revised with original Notes, by COLONEL LACH SZYRMA, Editor of "REVELATIONS OF SIBERIA." 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.

"Sadyk Pasha, the author of this work, is a Pole of noble birth. He is now commander of the Turkish Cossacks, a corps organised by himself. The volumes on the Moslem and the Christian, partly fact and partly fiction, written by him, and translated by Colonel Szyrma, display very well the literary spirit of the soldier. They are full of the adventures and emotions that belong to love and war; they treat of the present time, they introduce many existing people, and have the Danubian principalities for [scene of action. Here are sources of popularity which the book fairly claims. As a translation, it is excellent.—*Examiner*.

HOME LIFE IN RUSSIA. REVISED BY COL. LACH

SZYRMA, Editor of "REVELATIONS OF SIBERIA." 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"This work gives a very interesting and graphic account of the manners and customs of the Russian people. The most interesting and amusing parts of the work will be found to be those interior scenes in the houses of the wealthy and middle classes of Russia upon which we have but scanty information, although they are some of the most striking and truthful indications of the progress and civilization of a country. As such we recommend them to the study of our readers."—*Observer*.

"A curious, extraordinary, and very entertaining memoir is contained in these volumes, and at the present crisis cannot but command an eager perusal. The special recommendation of the work to us is the novel view and clear insight it affords Englishmen of the real character of the Russians. Their sayings and doings, and the machinery of their society, are all laid unsparingly bare."—*Sunday Times*.

"So little is known in this country of the internal condition of Russia, or the state of society in that enormous empire, that the contents of these volumes will naturally be perused with great curiosity. The volumes abound in lively dialogue, and are enlivened by satirical and humorous touches, and the manners and customs of the individuals composing what is called the middle rank in Russia are graphically described."—*Morning Herald*.

REVELATIONS OF SIBERIA. BY A BANISHED

LADY. Edited by COLONEL LACH SZYRMA. Third and cheaper Edition. 2 vols. post 8vo. 16s.

"A thoroughly good book. It cannot be read by too many people."—*Dickens's Household Words*.

"The authoress of these volumes was a lady of quality, who, having incurred the displeasure of the Russian Government for a political offence, was exiled to Siberia. The place of her exile was Berezov, the most northern part of this northern pénal settlement; and in it she spent about two years, not unprofitably, as the reader will find by her interesting work, containing a lively and graphic picture of the country, the people, their manners and customs, &c. The book gives a most important and valuable insight into the economy of what has been hitherto the terra incognita of Russian despotism."—*Daily News*.

"Since the publication of the famous romance the 'Exiles of Siberia,' we have had no account of these desolate lands more attractive than the present work."—*Globe*.

NARRATIVE OF A JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD,

Comprising A WINTER PASSAGE ACROSS THE ANDES TO CHILI, WITH A VISIT TO THE GOLD REGIONS OF CALIFORNIA AND AUSTRALIA, THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS, JAVA, &c. By F. GERSTAECKER. 3 vols. post 8vo. 3ls. 6d.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"Starting from Bremen for California, the author of this Narrative proceeded to Rio, and thence to Buenos Ayres; where he exchanged the wild seas for the yet wilder Pampas, and made his way on horseback to Valparaiso across the Cordilleras—a winter passage full of difficulty and danger. From Valparaiso he sailed to California, and visited San Francisco, Sacramento, and the mining districts generally. Thence he steered his course to the South Sea Islands, resting at Honolulu, Tahiti, and other gems of the sea in that quarter, and from thence to Sydney, marching through the Murray Valley, and inspecting the Adelaide district: From Australia he dashed onward to Java, riding through the interior, and taking a general survey of Batavia, with a glance at Japan and the Japanese. An active, intelligent, observant man, the notes he made of his adventures are full of variety and interest. His descriptions of places and persons are lively, and his remarks on natural productions and the phenomena of earth, sea, and sky are always sensible, and made with a view to practical results. Those portions of the Narrative which refer to California and Australia are replete with vivid sketches; and indeed the whole work abounds with living and picturesque descriptions of men, manners, and localities."—*Globe*.

"Independently of great variety—for these pages are never monotonous or dull—a pleasant freshness pervades Mr. Gerstaecker's chequered narrative. It offers much to interest, and conveys much valuable information, set forth in a very lucid and graphic manner."—*Athenæum*.

"A book of travels of a superior kind, both as regards the varied information it contains and the spirited style in which it is written."—*Literary Gazette*.

A SKETCHER'S TOUR ROUND THE WORLD. BY

ROBERT ELWES, Esq. Second Edition, 1 vol. royal 8vo., with 21 Coloured Illustrations from Original Designs by the Author. 2ls. elegantly bound, gilt edges.

"Combining in itself the best qualities of a library volume with that of a gift-book, is Mr. Elwes' 'Sketcher's Tour.' It is an unaffected, well-written record of a tour of some 36,000 miles, and is accompanied by a number of very beautiful tinted lithographs, executed by the author. These, as well as the literary sketches in the volume, deal most largely with Southern and Spanish America,—whence the reader is afterwards taken by Lima to the Sandwich Islands, is carried to and fro among the strange and exciting scenes of the Pacific,—thence sails to the Australian coast,—passes to China,—afterwards to Singapore and Bombay,—and so home by Egypt and Italy. The book is pleasantly written throughout, and with the picturesque variety that cannot but belong to the description of a succession of such scenes, is also full of interesting and instructive remarks."—*Examiner*.

"The garment in which this book comes forth seems to point out the drawing-room table as its place of destination. The nature of its contents,—cheerful, lively letter-press—will assure it a ready welcome there. Yet it is not, therefore, ineligible for the library shelf—even for that shelf which is devoted to 'Voyages Round the World.' Pleasanter reading, we repeat, need not be offered than our sketcher brings."—*Athenæum*

AUSTRALIA AS IT IS: ITS SETTLEMENTS, FARMS,

AND GOLD FIELDS. By F. LANCELOT, Esq., MINERALOGICAL SURVEYOR IN THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES. Second Edition, revised. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"This is an unadorned account of the actual condition in which these colonies are found, by a professional surveyor and mineralogist, who goes over the ground with a careful glance and a remarkable aptitude for seizing on the practical portions of the subject. On the climate, the vegetation, and the agricultural resources of the country, he is copious in the extreme, and to the intending emigrant an invaluable instructor. As may be expected from a scientific hand, the subject of gold digging undergoes a thorough manipulation. Mr. Lancelot dwells with minuteness on the several indications, stratifications, varieties of soil, and methods of working, experience has pointed out, and offers a perfect manual of the new craft to the adventurous settler. Nor has he neglected to provide him with information as to the sea voyage, and all its accessories, the commodities most in request at the antipodes, and a general view of social wants, family management, &c., such as a shrewd and observant counsellor, aided by old resident authorities, can afford. As a guide to the auriferous regions, as well as the pastoral solitudes of Australia, the work is unsurpassed."—*Globe*.

"We advise all about to emigrate to take this book as a counsellor and companion."—*Lloyd's Weekly Paper*.

A LADY'S VISIT TO THE GOLD DIGGINGS OF

AUSTRALIA. By MRS. CLACY. 1 vol. 10s. 6d.

"The most pithy and entertaining of all the books that have been written on the gold diggings."—*Literary Gazette*.

"Mrs. Clacy's book will be read with considerable interest, and not without profit. Her statements and advice will be most useful among her own sex."—*Athenæum*.

"Mrs. Clacy tells her story well. Her book is the most graphic account of the diggings and the gold country in general that is to be had."—*Daily News*.

"We recommend this work as the emigrant's *vade mecum*."—*Home Companion*.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF AUSTRALIAN LIFE.

By MRS. CLACY. Author of "A Lady's Visit to the Gold Diggings." 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"In these volumes Mrs. Clacy has presented life in Australia in all its varied aspects. An intimate acquaintance with the country, and with the circumstances in which settlers and emigrants find themselves, has enabled the writer to impart to her narrative a character of truthfulness and life-like animation, which renders them no less instructive than charming. The book is throughout exceedingly attractive."—*John Bull*.

"While affording amusement to the general reader, these 'Lights and Shadows of Australian Life,' are full of useful hints to intending emigrants, and will convey to friends at home acceptable information as to the country where so many now have friends or relatives."—*Literary Gazette*.

"These volumes consist of a series of very interesting tales, founded on facts, in which the chief features of a settler's life are shown. To intending emigrants the work will be specially attractive, but the ordinary novel reader will find that these narratives are more likely to amuse an idle hour than more ambitious productions—possessing, as they do, the charm of truth with the fascination of fiction."—*Sun*.

TRAVELS IN EUROPEAN TURKEY: THROUGH

BOSNIA, SERVIA, BULGARIA, MACEDONIA, ROUMELIA, ALBANIA, AND EPIRUS; WITH A VISIT TO GREECE AND THE IONIAN ISLES, and a HOMEWARD TOUR THROUGH HUNGARY AND THE SCLAVONIAN PROVINCES OF AUSTRIA ON THE LOWER DANUBE. By EDMUND SPENCER, Esq. Author of "Travels in Circassia," etc. Second and Cheaper Edition, in 2 vols. 8vo., with Illustrations, and a valuable Map of European Turkey from the most recent Charts in the possession of the Austrian and Turkish Governments, revised by the Author, 18s.

"These important volumes describe some of those countries to which public attention is now more particularly directed: Turkey, Greece, Hungary, and Austria. The author has given us a most interesting picture of the Turkish Empire, its weaknesses, and the embarrassments from which it is now suffering, its financial difficulties, the discontent of its Christian, and the turbulence of a great portion of its Mohammedan subjects. We cordially recommend Mr. Spencer's valuable and interesting volumes to the attention of the reader."—*U. S. Magazine.*

"This interesting work contains by far the most complete, the most enlightened, and the most reliable amount of what has been hitherto almost the terra incognita of European Turkey, and supplies the reader with abundance of entertainment as well as instruction."—*John Bull.*

A TOUR OF INQUIRY THROUGH FRANCE AND

ITALY, Illustrating their PRESENT SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION. By EDMUND SPENCER, Esq., Author of "Travels in European Turkey," "Circassia," &c. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"Mr. Spencer has travelled through France and Italy, with the eyes and feelings of a Protestant philosopher. His volumes contain much valuable matter, many judicious remarks, and a great deal of useful information."—*Morning Chronicle.*

ARCTIC MISCELLANIES, A SOUVENIR OF THE

LATE POLAR SEARCH. By THE OFFICERS AND SEAMEN OF THE EXPEDITION. DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO THE LORDS OF THE ADMIRALTY. Second Edition. 1 vol., with numerous Illustrations. 10s. 6d.

"This volume is not the least interesting or instructive among the records of the late expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, commanded by Captain Austin. The most valuable portions of the book are those which relate to the scientific and practical observations made in the course of the expedition, and the descriptions of scenery and incidents of arctic travel. From the variety of the materials, and the novelty of the scenes and incidents to which they refer, no less than the interest which attaches to all that relates to the probable safety of Sir John Franklin and his companions, the Arctic Miscellanies forms a very readable book, and one that redounds to the honour of the national character."—*The Times.*

FOREST LIFE IN CEYLON. BY W. KNIGHTON, M.A.,
 formerly SECRETARY TO THE CEYLON BRANCH ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
 Second Edition, 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"A very clever and amusing book, by one who has lived as a planter and journalist many years in Ceylon. The work is filled with interesting accounts of the sports, resources, productions, scenery, and traditions of the island. The sporting adventures are narrated in a very spirited manner."—*Standard*.

"We have not met with a more delightful book for a long time past."—*Lit. Gaz.*

"We have no recollection of a more interesting or instructive work on Ceylon and the Cingalese than that which Mr. Knighton has just given to the world. It displays a great deal of acuteness and sagacity in its observation of men and manners, and contains a vast deal of useful information on topics, historical, political, and commercial, and has the charm of a fluent and graphic style."—*Morning Post*.

TROPICAL SKETCHES; OR, REMINISCENCES OF
 AN INDIAN JOURNALIST. BY W. KNIGHTON, M.A., Author of
 "Forest Life in Ceylon." 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"When Mr. Knighton's pleasant volumes on Ceylon were published, we freely gave his publication the praise which it appears to have well deserved, since another edition has been called for. Amongst the writers of the day, we know of none who are more felicitous in hitting off with an amusing accuracy, the characters he has met with, and his descriptive powers are first-rate. Take his Sketches up and open where you will, he touches upon topics of varied nature—now political, anon historical or commercial, interspersed with traits of society and manners, every page teeming with information, combined with lively detail. His style, indeed, is eminently attractive. There is no weariness comes over the reader with Mr. Knighton's work before him—all is vivacity. The *Tropical Sketches* contains the result of the author's experience in the East in various capacities, but he is chiefly at home when he enters upon the narrative of his mission as a journalist. His revelations of his labours in an educational capacity, are highly amusing, and there is an added charm to the volumes that the impress of fidelity is stamped on every page. In short, *Tropical Sketches* may be set down as the work of a man of education and refinement, gifted with a keen observation for all that is passing around him; such a publication cannot fail in being both amusing and instructive."—*Sunday Times*.

FIVE YEARS IN THE WEST INDIES. BY CHARLES
 W. DAY, Esq. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"It would be unjust to deny the vigour, brilliancy and varied interest of this work, the abundant stores of anecdote and incident, and the copious detail of local habits and peculiarities in each island visited in succession."—*Globe*.

TRAVELS IN INDIA AND KASHMIR. BY BARON
 SCHONBERG. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"This account of a Journey through India and Kashmir will be read with considerable interest. Whatever came in his way worthy of record the author committed to writing, and the result is an entertaining and instructive miscellany of information on the country, its climate, its natural production, its history and antiquities, and the character, the religion, and the social condition of its inhabitants."—*John Bull*.

EIGHTEEN YEARS ON THE GOLD COAST OF

AFRICA; INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE NATIVE TRIBES, AND THEIR INTERCOURSE WITH EUROPEANS. By BRODIE CRUICKSHANK, MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, CAPE COAST CASTLE. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"This is one of the most interesting works that ever yet came into our hands. It possesses the charm of introducing us to habits and manners of the human family of which before we had no conception. Mrs. Beecher Stowe's work has, indeed, made us all familiar with the degree of intelligence and the disposition of the transplanted African; but it has been reserved to Mr. Cruickshank to exhibit the children of Ham in their original state, and to prove, as his work proves to demonstration, that, by the extension of a knowledge of the Gospel, and by that only can the African be brought within the pale of civilization. We anxiously desire to direct public attention to a work so valuable. An incidental episode in the work is an affecting narrative of the death of the gifted Letitia Elizabeth Landon (L. E. L.) written a few months after her marriage with Governor Maclean."—*Standard*.

EIGHT YEARS IN PALESTINE, SYRIA, AND ASIA

MINOR. By F. A. NEALE, Esq., LATE ATTACHED TO THE CONSULAR SERVICE IN SYRIA. Second Edition, 2 vols. post 8vo. with Illustrations, 21s.

"A very agreeable book. Mr. Neale is evidently quite familiar with the East, and writes in a lively, shrewd, and good-humoured manner. A great deal of information is to be found in his pages."—*Athenæum*.

KHARTOUM AND THE NILES. BY GEORGE MELLY,

Esq. Second Edition. 2 vols. post 8vo., with Maps and Illustrations, 21s.

"Mr. Melly is of the same school of travel as the author of 'Eöthen.' His book altogether is very agreeable, comprising, besides the description of Khartoum, many intelligent illustrations of the relations now subsisting between the Governments of the Sultan and the Pacha, and exceedingly graphic sketches of Cairo, the Pyramids, the Plain of Thebes, the Cataracts, &c."—*Examiner*.

TRAVELS IN BOLIVIA; WITH A TOUR ACROSS

THE PAMPAS TO BUENOS AYRES. BY L. HUGH DE BONNELI, of HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S LEGATION. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"Mr. Bonelli's official position gave him great opportunities of observation, of which he has freely availed himself, and he has furnished us with a very interesting and amusing book of travels respecting a country whose political and commercial importance is becoming every day more obvious."—*Observer*.

THE ANSYREEH AND ISMAELEEH: A VISIT TO

THE SECRET SECTS OF NORTHERN SYRIA, WITH A VIEW TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS. BY THE REV. S. LYDE, M.A., LATE CHAPLAIN AT BEYROUT. 1 vol. 10s. 6d.

"Mr. Lyde's pages furnish a very good illustration of the present state of some of the east known parts of Syria. Mr. Lyde visited the most important districts of the Ansyreeh, lived with them, and conversed with their sheiks or chief men. The practical aim of the author gives his volumes an interest which works of greater pretension want."—*Athenæum*.

SAM SLICK'S NEW WORK, NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE. 2 vols. post 8vo. 24s.

"Since Sam Slick's first work he has written nothing so fresh, racy, and genuinely humorous as this. Every line of it tells some way or other; instructively, satirically, jocosely, or wittily. Admiration at Sam's mature talents, and laughter at his droll yarns, constantly alternate, as with unhalting avidity we peruse these last volumes of his. They consist of 25 Chapters, each containing a tale, a sketch, or an adventure. In every one of them, the Clockmaker proves himself the fastest time killer a-going."—*Observer*.

SAM SLICK'S WISE SAWS AND MODERN INSTANCES; OR, WHAT HE SAID, DID, OR INVENTED. Second Edition. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"We do not fear to predict that these delightful volumes will be the most popular, as beyond doubt, they are the best, of all Judge Haliburton's admirable works. The 'Wise Saws and Modern Instances' evince powers of imagination and expression far beyond what even his former publications could lead any one to ascribe to the author. We have, it is true long been familiar with his quaint humour and racy narrative, but the volumes before us take a loftier range, and are so rich in fun and good sense, that to offer an extract as a sample would be an injustice to author and reader. It is one of the pleasantest books we ever read, and we earnestly recommend it."—*Standard*.

"Let Sam Slick go a mackerel fishing, or to court in England—let him venture alone among a tribe of the sauciest single women that ever banded themselves together in electric chain to turn tables or to mystify man—our hero always manages to come off with flying colours—to beat every craftsman in the cunning of his own calling—to get at the heart of every maid's and matron's secret. The book before us will be read and laughed over. Its quaint and racy dialect will please some readers—its abundance of yarns will amuse others. There is something in the volumes to suit readers of every humour."—*Athenæum*.

"The humour of Sam Slick is inexhaustible. He is ever and everywhere a welcome visitor; smiles greet his approach, and wit and wisdom hang upon his tongue. The present is altogether a most edifying production, remarkable alike for its racy humour, its sound philosophy, the felicity of its illustrations, and the delicacy of its satire. We promise our readers a great treat from the perusal of these 'Wise Saws and Modern Instances,' which contain a world of practical wisdom, and a treasury of the richest fun."—*Morning Post*.

THE AMERICANS AT HOME; OR, BYEWAYS, BACKWOODS, AND PRAIRIES. Edited by the Author of "SAM SLICK." 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.

"In the picturesque delineation of character, and the felicitous portraiture of national features, no writer of the present day equals Judge Haliburton. 'The Americans at Home' will not be less popular than any of his previous works."—*Post*.

TRAITS OF AMERICAN HUMOUR. EDITED BY the Author of "SAM SLICK." 3 vols. post 8vo. 31s. 6d.

"No man has done more than the facetious Judge Haliburton, through the mouth of the inimitable 'Sam,' to make the old parent country recognize and appreciate her queer transatlantic progeny. His present collection of comic stories and laughable traits is a budget of fun full of rich specimens of American humour."—*Globe*.

THE DRAMATIC WORKS OF MARY RUSSELL

MITFORD. Author of "Our Village," "Atherton," &c. 2 vols. post 8vo. with Portrait of the Author and other Illustrations. 21s.

"We recommend Miss Mitford's dramas heartily to all by whom they are unknown. A more graceful addition could not be made to any collection of dramatic works."—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

"Miss Mitford has collected into one chaplet the laurels gathered in her prime of authorship, and she has given it to the world with a graceful and loving letter of reminiscence and benediction. Laid by the side of the volume of dramatic works of Joanna Baillie, these volumes suffer no disparagement. This is high praise, and it is well deserved."—*Athenæum*.

"Miss Mitford's plays and dramatic scenes form very delightful reading."—*Examiner*.

"The high reputation which Miss Mitford has acquired as a dramatist will insure a hearty welcome to this collected edition of her dramatic works."—*John Bull*.

DARIEN; OR, THE MERCHANT PRINCE. BY ELIOT

WARBURTON. Second Edition. 3 vols. post 8vo.

"The scheme for the colonization of Darien by Scotchmen, and the opening of a communication between the East and West across the Isthmus of Panama, furnishes the foundation of this story, which is in all respects worthy of the high reputation which the author of the 'Crescent and the Cross' had already made for himself. The early history of the 'Merchant Prince' introduces the reader to the condition of Spain under the Inquisition; the portraiture of Scottish life which occupy a prominent place in the narrative, are full of spirit; the scenes in America exhibit the state of the natives of the New World at that period; the daring deeds of the Buccaneers supply a most romantic element in the story; and an additional interest is infused into it by the introduction of the various celebrated characters of the period, such as Law, the French financier, and Paterson, the founder of the Bank of England. All these varied ingredients are treated with that brilliancy of style and powerful descriptive talent, by which the pen of Eliot Warburton was so eminently distinguished."—*John Bull*.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MISSIONARY. BY

THE REV. J. P. FLETCHER. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

"We conscientiously recommend this book, as well for its amusing character as for the spirit it displays of earnest piety."—*Standard*.

SCENES FROM SCRIPTURE. BY THE REV. G.

CROLY, LL.D. 10s. 6d.

"Eminent in every mode of literature, Dr. Croly stands, in our judgment, first among the living poets of Great Britain—the only man of our day entitled by his power to venture within the sacred circle of religious poets."—*Standard*.

"An admirable addition to the library of religious families."—*John Bull*.

THE SONG OF ROLAND, AS CHANTED BEFORE

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS, BY THE MINSTREL TAILLEFER.

Translated by the Author of "EMILIA WYNDHAM." Small 4to., handsomely bound, gilt edges, 5s.

"The Song of Roland" is well worth general perusal. It is spirited and descriptive, and gives an important, and, no doubt, faithful picture of the chivalric manners and feelings of the age."—*Morning Herald*.

FAMILY ROMANCE; OR, DOMESTIC ANNALS OF THE ARISTOCRACY. BY SIR BERNARD BURKE, ULSTER KING OF ARMS. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

Among the many other interesting legends and romantic family histories comprised in these volumes, will be found the following:—The wonderful narrative of Maria Stella, Lady Newborough, who claimed on such strong evidence to be a Princess of the House of Orleans, and disputed the identity of Louis Philippe—The story of the humble marriage of the beautiful Countess of Strathmore, and the sufferings and fate of her only child—The Leaders of Fashion, from Gramont to D'Orsay—The rise of the celebrated Baron Ward, now Prime Minister at Parma—The curious claim to the Earldom of Crawford—The Strange Vicissitudes of our Great Families, replete with the most romantic details—The story of the Kirkpatrick of Closeburn (the ancestors of the French Empress), and the remarkable tradition associated with them—The Legend of the Lambtons—The verification in our own time of the famous prediction as to the Earls of Mar—Lady Ogilvy's escape—The Beresford and Wynyard ghost stories correctly told—&c. &c.

"It were impossible to praise too highly as a work of amusement these two most interesting volumes, whether we should have regard to its excellent plan or its not less excellent execution. The volumes are just what ought to be found on every drawing-room table. Here you have nearly fifty captivating romances with the pith of all their interest preserved in undiminished poignancy, and any one may be read in half an hour. It is not the least of their merits that the romances are founded on fact—or what, at least, has been handed down for truth by long tradition—and the romance of reality far exceeds the romance of fiction. Each story is told in the clear, unaffected style with which the author's former works have made the public familiar, while they afford evidence of the value, even to a work of amusement, of that historical and genealogical learning that may justly be expected of the author of 'The Peerage.'"—*Standard*.

"The very reading for sea-side or fire-side in our hours of idleness."—*Athenaeum*.

THE ROMANCE OF THE FORUM; OR, NARRATIVES, SCENES, AND ANECDOTES FROM COURTS OF JUSTICE, SECOND SERIES. BY PETER BURKE, Esq., of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law. 2 vols. post 8vo. 21s.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS:—Lord Crichton's Revenge—The Great Douglas Cause—Lord and Lady Kinnaird—Marie Delorme and Her Husband—The Spectral Treasure—Murders in Inns of Court—Matthieson the Forger—Trials that established the Illegality of Slavery—The Lover Highwayman—The Accusing Spirit—The Attorney-General of the Reign of Terror—Eccentric Occurrences in the Law—Adventuresses of Pretended Rank—The Courier of Lyons—General Sarrazin's Bigamy—The Elstree Murder—Count Bocarmé and his wife—Professor Webster, &c.

"We have no hesitation in recommending this, as one of the most interesting works that have been lately given to the public."—*Morning Chronicle*

"The favour with which the first series of this publication was received, has induced Mr. Burke to extend his researches, which he has done with great judgment. The incidents forming the subject of the second series are as extraordinary in every respect, as those which obtained so high a meed of celebrity for the first. Some of the tales could scarcely be believed to be founded in fact, or to be records of events that have startled the world, were there not the incontestable evidence which Mr. Burke has established to prove that they have actually happened."—*Messenger*.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF A CLEVER WOMAN.

"The 'Clever Woman' is of the same class with the 'Vicar of Wrexhill,' and 'Widow Barnaby.' It is the best novel the season has produced. No person can fail to be amused by it."—*Critic*.

"Mrs. Trollope has done full justice to her well-earned reputation as one of the cleverest novelists of the day in this new production of her fertile pen."—*John Bull*.

UNCLE WALTER.

3 vols.

"'Uncle Walter' is an exceedingly entertaining novel. It assures Mrs. Trollope more than ever in her position as one of the ablest fiction writers of the day."—*Morning Post*.

THE YOUNG HEIRESS.

3 vols.

"The knowledge of the world which Mrs. Trollope possesses in so eminent a degree is strongly exhibited in the pages of this novel."—*Observer*.

BY MRS. GORE.

MAMMON; OR, THE HARDSHIPS OF AN HEIRESS.

3 vols.

THE DEAN'S DAUGHTER.

3 vols.

"One of the best of Mrs. Gore's stories. The volumes are strewn with smart and sparkling epigram."—*Morning Chronicle*.

PROGRESS & PREJUDICE.

3 vols.

"This entertaining and particularly clever novel is not to be analysed, but to be praised, and that emphatically."—*Examiner*.

BY THE AUTHOR OF MARGARET MAITLAND.

MAGDALEN HEPBURN;

A STORY OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMATION.

3 vols.

"'Magdalen Hepburn will sustain the reputation which the author of 'Margaret Maitland' has acquired. It is a well prepared and carefully executed picture of the society and state of manners in Scotland at the dawn of the Reformation. John Knox is successfully drawn."—*Athenæum*.

"'Magdalen Hepburn' is a story of the Scottish Reformation, with John Knox prominently introduced among the dramatic personæ. The book is thoroughly enjoyable, pleasant women move to and fro in it, characters are well discriminated, and there is a sense everywhere of the right and good, as well as the picturesque."—*Examiner*.

HARRY MUIR.

SECOND EDITION. 3 vols.

"We prefer 'Harry Muir' to most of the Scottish novels that have appeared since Galt's domestic stories. This new tale, by the author of 'Margaret Maitland,' is a real picture of the weakness of man's nature and the depths of woman's kindness. The narrative, to repeat our praise, is not one to be entered on or parted from without our regard for its writer being increased."—*Athenæum*.

"This is incomparably the best of the author's works. In it the brilliant promise afforded by 'Margaret Maitland' has been fully realised, and now there can be no question that, for graphic pictures of Scottish life, the author is entitled to be ranked second to none among modern writers of fiction."—*Caledonian Mercury*.

ADAM GRAEME,
OF MOSSGRAY.

3 vols.

"A story awakening genuine emotions of interest and delight by its admirable pictures of Scottish life and scenery."—*Post*.

CALEB FIELD. A TALE.

1 vol. 6s.

"This beautiful production is every way worthy of its author's reputation in the very first rank of contemporary writers."—*Standard*.

CONSTANCE HERBERT.

By GERALDINE JEWSEBURY.

Author of "MARIAN WITHERS," "ZOE,"
&c. 3 vols.**OAKLEIGH MASCOTT.**

By L. HOWE.

Dedicated to Professor Aytoun. 2 vols.

"A very clever romance. The style throughout is fluent and forcible, and many of the scenes are sketched with considerable graphic power."—*Morning Post*.

ANTIPODES;

OR, THE NEW EXISTENCE.

A TALE OF REAL LIFE.

By A CLERGYMAN. 3 vols.

HERBERT LAKE.By the Author of "ANNE DYSART."
3 vols.

"Many and various are the cross purposes of love which run through this cleverly-written tale, from the pen of the talented author of 'Anne Dysart.' While administering largely to the entertainment of the reader, the Author has added to a well-earned reputation."—*John Bull*.

THE YOUNG HUSBAND.

By MRS. GREY. Author of "THE GAMBLER'S WIFE," &c. 3 vols.

"In this fascinating novel Mrs. Grey has surpassed her former productions, talented and powerful as they were."—*John Bull*.

"The merit of producing an admirable story may be justly awarded to Mrs. Grey."—*Sunday Times*.

THE CURATE OF OVERTON.

3 vols.

"A powerfully written story, the characters and incidents of which are portrayed with great skill."—*John Bull*.

"The startling secession of such men as Newman, Manning, and Wilberforce, renders the revelations which the author has made in these interesting and instructive volumes extremely well-timed."—*Britannia*.

**CONFESSIONS
OF AN ETONIAN.**

By C. ROWCROFT, Esq.

3 vols.

VIVIA.

By MRS. J. E. DALRYMPLE.

Dedicated to Sir E. Bulwer Lytton. 2 vols.

"Vivia is an excellent novel. Mrs. Dalrymple paints society in its true colours. We heartily congratulate her upon a production which displays such high purpose, wrought out with so much ability."—*Post*.

MATHEW PAXTON.

Edited by the Author of "JOHN DRAYTON," "ALLIEFORD," &c. 3 vols.

"'Mathew Paxton' bears a strong generic resemblance to those clever stories 'John Drayton' and 'Allieford,' and awakens in the perusal a kindred gratification. It displays the same simple pathos, the same homely humour, the same truth to nature, and the same fine sense of national peculiarity."—*Post*.

ALLIEFORD.

A FAMILY HISTORY.

By the Author of "JOHN DRAYTON." 3 v.

"'Allieford' is the biography of the clever writer of 'John Drayton.' It is a deeply interesting tale."—*Britannia*.

A PHYSICIAN'S TALE.

3 vols.

"A vast amount of thought and knowledge is displayed in this work. Many various phases of society, and different gradations of character, are dexterously given to sight."—*Sun*.

CREWE RISE.

By JOHN C. JEAFFRESON. 3 vols.

"A clever novel, and one that, without any great wealth or diversity of incident, contrives to be deeply interesting. The career of a brilliant young man at college—his temptations, errors, and resolute self-redemption from evil courses—makes the main interest of the story, which is set forth with a vigour and reality that looks like a daguerreotype from facts."—*Athenæum*.

EDWARD WILLOUGHBY.

By the Author of "THE DISCIPLINE OF LIFE." 3 vols.

"We like all Lady Emily Ponsonby's novels, and this is, in our judgment, the best of them."—*Morning Post*.

PHEMIE MILLAR.

By the Author of "THE KINNEARS." 3 v.

"We feel obliged to the author for giving us such a fresh pleasant story as 'Phemie Millar.' Out of the homeliest of details a certain fascination is evoked which ensures the reader interest to the end."—*Athenæum*.

REGINALD LYLE.

By Miss PARDOE. 3 v.

"An excellent novel, containing a great variety of well-drawn characters, and keeping up the interest of the reader to the last page."—*Atlas*.

**FLORENCE,
THE BEAUTIFUL.**

By A. BAILLIE COCHRANE, Esq. 2 v.

"The best story that has yet appeared from the pen of the talented author."—*Herald*.

**THE SECRET HISTORY
OF A HOUSEHOLD.**

By the Author of

"ALICE WENTWORTH." 3 vols.

ALICE WENTWORTH.

3 vols.

"This novel reminds us of the tales by Lady Scott, which had power and pathos enough to get a hearing and keep a place, even though Lister, Ward, and Bulwer were all in the field, with their manly experiences of modern life and society."—*Athenæum*.

JANET MOWBRAY.

By CAROLINE GRAUTOFF. 3 v.

"This very pleasant tale of 'Janet Mowbray' is a love story—and a very good one—full of agreeable variety and interest."—*Examiner*.

THE ROSES.

By the Author of "THE FLIRT." 3 v.

"'The Roses' displays, with the polish always attending a later work, all the talent which appeared in 'The Flirt,' and 'The Manœuvring Mother.'"—*Standard*.

CHARLES AUCHESTER.

3 vols.

"Music has never had so glowing an advocate as the author of these volumes. There is an amazing deal of ability displayed in them."—*Herald*.

THE KINNEARS.

A SCOTTISH STORY. 3 v.

**THE LADY
AND THE PRIEST.**

By MRS. MABERLY. 3 vols.

THE COLONEL.

By the Author of "PERILS OF FASHION."

3 vols.

THE VILLAGE**MILLIONNAIRE.**By the Author of "THE FORTUNES OF
WOMAN." 3 vols.

"Great diversity of character and an endless succession of surprising incidents and vicissitudes impart an absorbing interest to this new production of Miss Lamont's pen."—*John Bull*.

MARY SEAHAM.

By MRS. GREY. 3 vols.

"Equal to any former novel by its author."—*Athenæum*.

AUBREY.

By the Author of "EMILIA WYNDHAM."

3 vols.

"This novel is worthy of the author's reputation. The interest of the story is powerfully kept up, and there is much truthful and discriminating depicting of character."—*Literary Gazette*.

CASTLE AVON.

By the Author of "EMILIA WYNDHAM."

3 vols.

"One of the most successful of the author's works."—*Post*.

"These volumes abound in delicate and passionate writing."—*Examiner*.

**THE DAUGHTER
OF THE SOUTH.**

By MRS. CLARA WALBEY. 3 vols.

Dedicated to the Earl of Carlisle.

ANNETTE. A TALE.

By W. F. DEACON.

With a Memoir of the Author, by the Hon. Sir T. N. Talfourd, D.C.L. 3 vols.

"'Annette' is a stirring tale. The prefatory memoir of Sir Thomas Talfourd would be at all times interesting, nor the less so for containing two long letters from Sir Walter Scott to Mr. Deacon, full of gentle far-thinking wisdom."—*Examiner*.

LADY MARION.

By MRS. W. FOSTER.

3 vols.

**THE BELLE
OF THE VILLAGE.**By the Author of "THE OLD ENGLISH
GENTLEMAN."

3 vols.

COLBURN'S UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE, AND
NAVAL AND MILITARY JOURNAL. Published on the first of every month, price 3s. 6d.

This popular periodical, which has now been established a quarter of a century, embraces subjects of such extensive variety and powerful interest as must render it scarcely less acceptable to readers in general than to the members of those professions for whose use it is more particularly intended. Independently of a succession of Original Papers on innumerable interesting subjects, Personal Narratives, Historical Incidents, Correspondence, etc., each number comprises Biographical Memoirs of Eminent Officers of all branches of service, Reviews of New Publications, either immediately relating to the Army or Navy, or involving subjects of utility or interest to the members of either, full Reports of Trials by Courts Martial, Distribution of the Army and Navy, General Orders, Circulars, Promotions, Appointments, Births, Marriages, Obituary, etc., with all the Naval and Military Intelligence of the month.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"This is confessedly one of the ablest and most attractive periodicals of which the British press can boast, presenting a wide field of entertainment to the general as well as professional reader. The suggestions for the benefit of the two services are distinguished by vigour of sense, acute and practical observation, an ardent love of discipline, tempered by a high sense of justice, honour, and a tender regard for the welfare and comfort of our soldiers and seamen."—*Globe*.

"At the head of those periodicals which furnish useful and valuable information to their peculiar classes of readers, as well as amusement to the general body of the public, must be placed the 'United Service Magazine, and Naval and Military Journal.' It numbers among its contributors almost all those gallant spirits who have done no less honour to their country by their swords than by their pens, and abounds with the most interesting discussions on naval and military affairs, and stirring narratives of deeds of arms in all parts of the world. Every information of value and interest to both the Services is culled with the greatest diligence from every available source, and the correspondence of various distinguished officers which enrich its pages is a feature of great attraction. In short, the 'United Service Magazine' can be recommended to every reader who possesses that attachment to his country which should make him look with the deepest interest on its naval and military resources."—*Sun*.

"This truly national periodical is always full of the most valuable matter for professional men."—*Morning Herald*.

"To military and naval men, and to that class of readers who hover on the skirts of the Service, and take a world of pains to inform themselves of all the goings on, the modes and fashions, the movements and adventures connected with ships and barracks, this periodical is indispensable. It is a repertory of facts and criticisms—narratives of past experience, and fictions that are as good as if they were true—tables and returns—new inventions and new books bearing upon the army and navy—correspondence crowded with intelligence—and sundry unclaimed matters that lie in close neighbourhood with the professions, and contribute more or less to the stock of general useful information."—*Atlas*.

HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 049757500